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# CHINKIE'S FLAT

AND

# OTHER STORIES

BY

LOUIS BECKE

AUTHOR OF

"BY REEF AND PALM," "BREACHLEY, BLACK SHEEP,"

"HELEN ADAIR," ETC., ETC.

LONDON

T. FISHER UNWIN

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1904

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To

MY DEAR OLD COMRADES

IN

NORTH QUEENSLAND.

ROUEN,
*December*, 1903.

Prescott Co. July 24, 1905 $1.00

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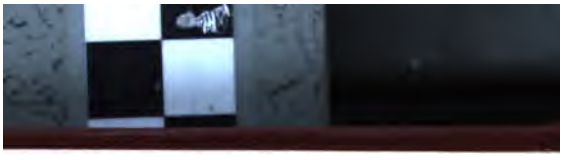
## CHAPTER I

### "CHINKIE'S FLAT"

"CHINKIE'S FLAT," in its decadence, was generally spoken of, by the passing traveller, as a "God-forsaken hole," and it certainly did present a repellent appearance when seen for the first time, gasping under the torrid rays of a North Queensland sun, which had dried up every green thing except the silver-leaved ironbarks, and the long, sinuous line of she-oaks which denoted the course of Connolly's Creek on which it stood.

"The township" was one of the usual Queensland mining type, a dozen or so of bark-roofed humpies, a public-house with the title of "The Digger's Rest," a blacksmith's forge, and a quartz-crushing battery.

The battery at Chinkie's Flat stood apart from the "township" on a little rise overlooking the yellow sands of Connolly's Creek, from whence it derived its water supply—when there happened to be any water in that part of the creek. The building which covered the antiquated five-stamper battery, boiler, engine, and tanks, was merely a huge roof of bark supported on





untrimmed posts of brigalow and swamp gum, but rude as was the structure, the miners at Chinkie's Flat, and other camps in the vicinity, had once been distinctly proud of their battery, which possessed the high-sounding title of "The Ever Victorious," and had achieved fame by having in the "good times" of the Flat yielded a certain Peter Finnerty two thousand ounces of gold from a hundred tons of alluvial. The then owner of the battery was an intelligent, but bibulous ex-marine engineer, who had served with Gordon in China, and when he erected the structure he formally christened it "The Ever Victorious," in memory of Gordon's army, which stamped out the Taeping rebellion.

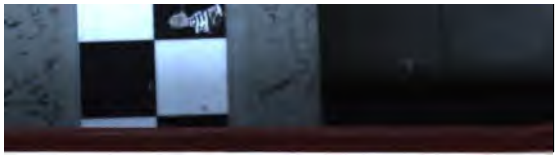
The first crushing put through was Finnerty's, and when the "clean-up" was over, and the hundreds of silvery balls of amalgam placed in the retorts turned out over one hundred and sixty-six pounds' weight of bright yellow gold, Chinkie's Flat went wild with excitement and spirituous refreshment.

In less than three months there were over five hundred diggers on the field, and the "Ever Victorious" banged and pounded away night and day, the rattle and clang of the stamps only ceasing at midnight on Saturday, and remaining silent till midnight on Sunday, the Sabbath being devoted "to cleaning-up," retorting the amalgam, and overhauling and repairing the machinery, and for relaxation, organising riding parties of twenty or thirty, and chasing Chinamen, of whom there were over three hundred within a radius of twenty miles.

The rich alluvial of Chinkie's Flat had, as a matter

of fact, been first discovered by a number of Chinese diggers, who were each getting from five to ten ounces of gold per day, when they were discovered by the aforesaid Peter Finnerty, who was out prospecting with a couple of mates. Their indignation that a lot of heathen "Chows" should be scooping up gold so easily, while they, Christians and legitimate miners, should be toiling over the barren ridges day after day without striking anything, was so great that for the moment, as they sat on their horses and viewed the swarming Chinese working their cradles on the bank of the creek, the power of speech deserted them. Hastily turning their tired horses' heads, they rode as hard as they could to the nearest mining camp, and on the following day thirty hairy-faced foreign-devils came charging into the Chinese camp, uttering fearful threats, and shooting right and left (with blank cartridges). The Chinese broke and fled, and in half an hour each of the thirty men had pegged out a claim, and Chinkie's Flat became famous as one of the richest, though smallest, alluvial diggings in the Far North.

Three months after the "discovery" of the field by Mr. Peter Finnerty, old "Taeping," as Gordon's ex-marine engineer had been promptly nicknamed, arrived with his crushing battery, and then indeed were halcyon days for the Flat. From early morn till long past midnight, the little bar of the "Digger's Rest" was crowded with diggers, packhorsemen and teamsters; a police trooper arrived and fixed his tent on the ridge overlooking the creek, and then—the very zenith of prosperity — a bank official followed, and a stately





building, composed of a dozen sheets of bark for a roof, and flour sacks for the sides, was erected and opened for business on the same day, amid much rejoicing and a large amount of liquid refreshment dispensed by the landlord of the "hotel" at a shilling per nobbler.

For six months longer all went well: more alluvial patches were discovered in the surrounding country, and then several rich reefs were found a mile away from the Flat, and every day new men arrived from Cooktown to the north, and Brisbane, Sydney, and far New Zealand to the south. Three new "hotels" sprang up; the police force was increased by another trooper and two black trackers, who rode superciliously around the camp, carbines on thighs, in their dark blue uniforms with scarlet facings, and condescended to drink with even the humblest white man; and then came the added glory of the "Chinkie's Flat Gold Escort"—when a police van with an Irish sergeant, two white troopers, and eight black police rattled through the camp, and pulled up at the bank, which now had a corrugated iron roof, a proper door, and two windows, and (the manager's own private property) a tin shower bath suspended by a cord under the verandah, a seltzogene, and a hen with seven chickens. The manager himself was a young sporting gentleman of parts, and his efforts to provide Sunday recreation for his clients were duly appreciated—he was secretary of the Chinkie's Flat Racing Club (meeting every alternate Sunday), and he and old "Taeping" between them owned a dozen of kangaroo dogs, which lived on the community generally, and afforded much exciting sport every Saturday, either in hunting kan-

garoos or Chinamen, both of which were plentiful in the vicinity.

For although Peter Finnerty and his party had succeeded in driving away the heathen from the Flat itself, the continued further discoveries of rich alluvial had brought them swarming into the district from all the other gold-fields in the colony in such numbers that it was impossible to keep the almond-eyed mining locusts out, especially as the Government was disposed to give them a measure of protection—not from any unnatural sentiment, but purely because they were revenue producers, and the Government badly wanted money. Then, too, their camps were so large, and so many of them were armed, and disposed to fight when in a corner, that the breaking up of a "Chows' Camp" became more and more difficult, and in the end the white diggers had to be content with surprising outlying prospecting parties, chasing them with kangaroo dogs back to their main camp, and burning their huts and mining gear, after first making a careful search for gold, concealed under the earthen floor, or among their ill-smelling personal effects. Sometimes they were rewarded, sometimes not, but in either case they were satisfied that they were doing their duty to Queensland and themselves by harrying the heathen who raged so furiously, and were robbing the country of its gold.

Then, after old "Taeping" had succumbed to too much "Digger's Rest," and Finnerty—now Peter Grattan Finnerty, Esq., Member of the Legislative Assembly of Queensland—had left the Flat and become the champion of the "struggling whoite miner" in the

House at a salary of £300 a year, came bad times, for the alluvial became worked out; and in parties of twos and threes the old hands began to leave, heading westward across the arid desert towards the Gilbert and the Etheridge Rivers, dying of thirst or under the spears of the blacks by the way, but ever heedless of what was before when the allurements and potentialities of a new field lay beyond the shimmering haze of the sandy horizon.

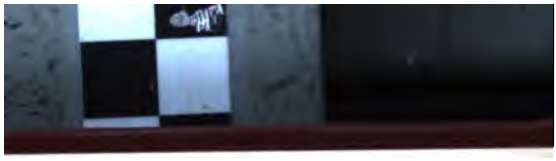
Then, as the miners left, the few "cockatoo" settlers followed them, or shifted in nearer to the town on the sea-coast with their horse and bullock teams, and an ominous silence began to fall upon the Flat when the tinkle of the cattle bells no longer was heard among the dark fringe of sighing she-oaks bordering the creek. As day by day the quietude deepened, the parrots and pheasants and squatter pigeons flew in and about the Leichhardt trees at the foot of the bluff, and wild duck at dusk came splashing into the battery dam, for there was now no one who cared to shoot them; the merry-faced, rollicking, horse-racing young bank manager and his baying pack of gaunt kangaroo dogs had vanished with the rest; and then came the day when but eight men remained—seven being old hands, and the eighth a stranger, who, with a blackboy, had arrived the previous evening.

And had it not been for the coming of the stranger, Chinkie's Flat would, in a few weeks, have been left to solitude, and reported to the Gold-fields Warden as "abandoned and duffered out."

## CHAPTER II

### GRAINGER MAKES A "DEAL"

THREE years before Edward Grainger had been the leader of a small prospecting party which had done fairly well on the rivers debouching into the Gulf of Carpentaria from the western side of Cape York Peninsula. He was an Englishman, his mates were all Australian-born, vigorous, sturdy bushmen, inured to privation and hardship, and possessing unbounded confidence in their leader, though he was by no means the oldest man of the party, and not a "native." But Grainger had had great experience as an explorer and prospector, for he had been compelled to begin the battle of life when but a lad of fifteen. His father, once a fairly wealthy squatter in the colony of Victoria, was ruined by successive droughts, and died leaving his station deeply mortgaged to the bank, which promptly foreclosed, and Mrs. Grainger found herself and two daughters dependent upon her only son, a boy of fifteen, for a living. He, however, was equal to the occasion. Leaving his mother and sisters in lodgings in Melbourne, he made his way to New South Wales with a mob of travelling cattle, earning his pound a week and





rations. At Sydney he worked on the wharves as a lumper, and then joined in the wild rush to the famous Tambaroora diggings, and was fortunate enough to meet with remunerative employment, and from then began his mining experiences, which in the course of the following ten years took him nearly all over the Australian colonies, New Zealand, and Tasmania. Never making much money, and never very "hard up," he had always managed to provide for his mother and sisters; and when he formed his prospecting party to Cape York and sailed from Brisbane, he knew that they would not suffer from any financial straits for at least two years.

For nearly three years he and his party wandered from one river to another along the torrid shores of the great gulf, sometimes doing well, sometimes not getting enough gold to pay for the food they ate, but always, always hopeful of the day when they would "strike it rich." Then came misfortune—sharp and sudden.

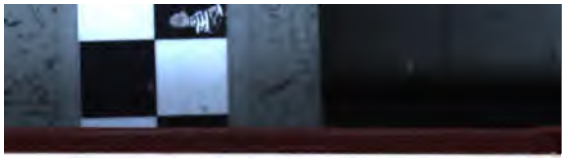
Camped on the Batavia River during the wet season, the whole party of five sickened with malaria, and found themselves unable to move to the high land at the head of the river owing to all their horses having died from eating "poison plant." Too weak to travel by land, they determined to build a raft and reach the mouth of the river, where there was a small cattle station. Here they intended to remain till the end of the rains, buy fresh horses and provisions, and return and prospect some of the deep gullies and watercourses at the head of the Batavia River.

Scarcely had they completed the raft, and loaded it

with their effects, when they were rushed by a mob of blacks, and in a few seconds two of the five were gasping out their lives from spear wounds, and all the others were wounded. Fortunately for the survivors, Grainger had his revolver in his belt, and this saved them, for he at once opened fire on the savages, whilst the other men worked the raft out into the middle of the stream, where they were out of danger from spears and able to use their rifles.

After a terrible voyage of three days, and suffering both from their wounds and the bone-racking agonies of fever, they at last reached the cattle station, where they were kindly received in the rough, hospitable fashion common to all pioneers in Australia. But, when at the end of a month one of Grainger's mates died of his wounds, and the other bade him goodbye and went off in a pearling lugger to Thursday Island, the leader sickened of Cape York Peninsula, and turned his face southwards once more, in the hope that fortune would be more kind to him on the new rushes at the Cloncurry, seven hundred miles away. From the station owner he bought six horses, and with but one black-boy for a companion, started off on his long, long journey through country which for the most part had not yet been traversed even by the explorer.

Travelling slowly, prospecting as he went, and adding a few ounces of gold here and there to the little bag he carried in his saddle-pouch, quite three months passed ere he and the black boy reached the Cloncurry. Here, however, he found nothing to tempt him—the field was overcrowded, *and every day* brought fresh arrivals, and





so, after a week's spell, he once more set out, this time to the eastward towards the alluvial fields near the Burdekin River, of which he had heard.

It was at the close of a long day's ride over grassless, sun-smitten country, that he came in sight of Chinkie's Flat, and the welcome green of the she-oaks fringing Connolly's Creek and soughing to the wind. The quietness and verdancy of the creek pleased him, and he resolved to have a long, long spell, and try and get rid of the fever which had again attacked him and made his life a misery.

Riding up to the hotel he found a party of some twenty or more diggers who were having a last carouse—for the "benefit" of the landlord—ere they bade goodbye to Chinkie's Flat on the following evening. Among them were two men who had become possessed of the "Ever Victorious" battery, left to them by the recently deceased "Taeping," who had succumbed to alleged rum and bad whiskey. They jocularly offered Grainger the entire plant for twenty-five pounds and his horses. He made a laughing rejoinder and said he would take a look at the machine in the morning. He meant to have a long spell, he said, and Chinkie's Flat would suit him better than Townsville or Port Denison to pull up, as hotels there were expensive and he had not much money. Then, as was customary, he returned the drink he had accepted from them by shouting for all hands, and was at once voted "a good sort."

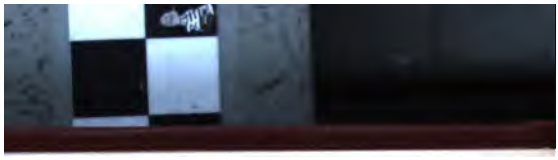
In the morning he walked down to the deserted battery, examined it carefully, and found that although

it was in very bad order, and deficient especially in screens — the one greatest essential — it was still capable of a great deal of work. Then he washed off a dish or two of tailings from one of the many heaps about, and although he had no acid, nor any other means of making a proper test in such a short time, his scientific knowledge acquired on the big gold-fields of the southern colonies and New Zealand showed him that there was a very heavy percentage of gold still to be won from the tailings by simple and inexpensive treatment.

"I'll buy the thing," he said to himself; "I can't lose much by doing so, and there's every chance of saving a good deal of gold, if I once get some fine screens, and that will only take six weeks or so."

By noon the "deal" was completed, and in exchange for twenty-five pounds in cash, six horses and their saddlery, Grainger, amid much good-humoured chaff from the vendors, took possession of the "Ever Victorious" crushing mill, together with some thousands of tons of tailings, but when he announced his intention of putting the plant in order and crushing for the "public" generally, as well as for himself, six men who yet had some faith in the field and believed that some of the many reefs would pay to work, elected to stay, especially when Grainger said that if their crushings turned out "duffers" he would charge them nothing for using the battery.

At one o'clock that day there were but eight Europeans and one black boy left on the once noisy Chinkie's Flat—the landlord of "The Digger's Rest,"





six miners, Grainger, and the black boy, "Jacky," who had accompanied him on his arduous journey from the Batavia River. At Grainger's request they all met at the public-house, and sat down to a dinner of salt meat, damper, and tea, and after it was finished and each man had lit his pipe, Grainger went into details.

"Now, boys, this is how the thing hangs. I've bought the old rattletrap because I believe there's a lot of life in the old girl yet, and I'm going to spend all the money I have in putting her in order and getting some new gear up from Brisbane or Sydney. If I lose my money I won't grumble, but I don't think I *shall* lose it if you will agree to give some of the reefs a thorough good trial. As I told you, I won't ask you for a penny if the stone I crush for you turns out no good; but it is my belief—and I know what I am talking about—that there are a thousand tons of surface stuff lying around this field which will give half an ounce to an ounce to the ton if it is put through a decent machine. And I'm going to make the old 'Ever Victorious' a pretty decent battery before long. But it's no good my spending my money—I possess only four hundred pounds—if you don't back me up and lend a hand."

"You're the man for us," said one of the men; "we'll stick to you and do all the bullocking. But the battery is very old, and we have the idea that old Taeping wasn't much of a boss of a crushing mill, and didn't know much about amalgamation."

Grainger nodded: "I am sure of it. I don't believe

that he saved more than 50 per cent. of the gold from the surface stuff he put through, and not more than a third from the stone. . . . Well, boys, what is it to be?"

The men looked at each other for a moment or two, and then they one and all emphatically asserted their intention of remaining on the field, assisting Grainger in repairing the plant and raising trial crushings of stone from every reef on the field.

"That's all right, then, boys," said Grainger. "Now you go ahead and raise the stone, and as soon as I am a bit stronger I'll start off for the Bay * and buy what I want in the way of screens, grinding pans, quicksilver, and other gear. I'm almost convinced that with new, fine screens we shall get good results out of the stone, and if we are disappointed, then we'll tackle that heap of tailings. I've seen a lot of tailings treated without being roasted in Victoria, and understand the process right enough."

"Well, we'll do our share of yacker, mister," said a man named Dick Scott.

"And I'll do mine. As soon as I am fit some of you must lend me a couple of horses, and I'll ride down to the Bay. I daresay I can get all that we want there in the way of machinery without my going or sending to Brisbane for it."

On the following morning work was started by the six men, the landlord of the public-house agreeing to cook for all hands for the first week, while Grainger and the

* The present city of Townsville, then always called "The Bay," it being situated on the shores of Cleveland Bay.

black boy (though the former was still very weak from recurrent attacks of ague) tried numberless prospects from all parts of the heaps of tailings. At the end of a week the miners began to raise some very likely-looking stone, and Grainger, finding some jars of muriatic acid among the stores belonging to the battery, made some further tests of the tailings with results which gave him the greatest satisfaction. He, however, said nothing about this to his new mates, intending to give them a pleasant surprise later on in the week before he left on his journey to the coast.

At six o'clock one evening, just as the men were returning from the claim for supper, Jacky, the black boy, was seen coming along the track at a fast canter. He had been out looking for some cattle belonging to Jansen the landlord, which had strayed away among the ranges.

"What's the matter, Jacky?" asked the men, as the boy jumped off his horse.

"I bin see him plenty feller Chinaman come along road. Altogether thirty-one. Close to now—'bout one feller mile away, I think it."

## CHAPTER III

### JIMMY AH SAN

CONSTERNATION was depicted on the faces of the men, and they all began to question Jacky at once, until Grainger appeared, and then the black boy gave them further particulars—the Chinamen, he said, were all on foot, each man carrying two baskets on a stick, but there were also five or six pack-horses loaded with picks, shovels, dishes, and other mining gear.

"Curse the dirty, yaller-hided swine!" cried Dick Scott, turning excitedly to Grainger. "What's to be done? They've come to rush the Flat again; but, by thunder! I'll be a stiff 'un afore a Chow fills another dish with wash-dirt on Connolly's Creek."

"And me, too!" "And me, too!" growled the others angrily, and Grainger, as he looked at their set, determined faces, knew they would soon be beyond control, and bloodshed would follow if the advancing Chinamen tried to come on to the field. But, nevertheless, he was thoroughly in sympathy with them. The advent of these Chinese—probably but an advance guard of many hundreds—would simply mean ruination to himself and his mates, just as their prospects were so

bright. The men looked upon him as their leader, and he must act—and act quickly.

"Let them come along, boys. Then we'll bail them up as soon as they come abreast of us, and have a little 'talkee, talkee' with them. But for heaven's sake try and keep cool, and I daresay when they see we look ugly at them, they'll trot on. How many of you have guns of any kind?"

Four rifles and two shot guns were quickly produced, and then every one waited till the first of the Chinese appeared, marching one behind the other. The foremost man was dressed in European clothes, and the moment Scott saw him, he exclaimed—

"Why, it's Jimmy Ah San! I used to know him at Gympie in the old times. He's not a bad sort of a Chow. Come on, boys!"

Grainger, who was not just then well enough to go with them, but remained in his seat with his revolver on his knee, could not help smiling at the sudden halt and terrified looks of the Chinese, when Scott and the others drew up in front of them with their weapons at the present. Half of them at once dropped their baskets and darted off into the bush, the rest crowding together like a flock of terrified sheep. The leader, however, came steadily on. Scott stepped out and met him.

"Good-morning. What do you and all your crowd want here?"

"Nothing," replied the Chinaman quietly, in excellent English, "nothing but to get down to the creek and camp for a few days. But why do you all come out with guns? We cannot do you any harm."

"Just so. But we can do *you* a lot if you try on any games, Mr. Jimmy Ah San."

"Ah, you know me then," said the man, looking keenly at Scott.

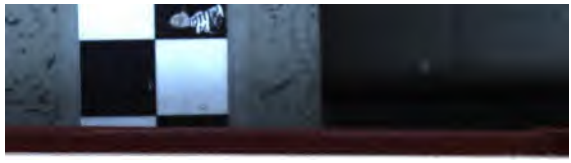
"Yes, I do, an' you're all right enough. But me an' my mates is going to keep this field for white men—it ain't goin' to be no Chinaman's diggins'. So what's yer move?"

"Only what I said. Look at my men! We do not want to stop here; we wish to push along to the coast. Some of them are dying from exhaustion, and my pack-horses can hardly go another quarter of a mile."

Scott scratched his chin meditatively, and then consulted with his mates. He, although so rough in his speech, was not a bad-natured man, and he could see that the Chinese were thoroughly done up, and worn down to skin and bone. Then presently Grainger walked over and joined them, and heard what Ah San had to say.

"I'm sorry that you are in such a bad fix," he said, "but you know as well as I do that if any of your men put a pick into ground here, there will be serious trouble, and if they lose their lives you will be responsible—and may perhaps lose your own."

"I promise you that nothing like that will happen," replied the Chinaman. "My men are all diggers, it is true, but we will not attempt to stay on any field where we are not wanted. My name is James Ah San. I am a British subject, and have lived in Australia for twenty-five years. That man" (pointing





to Scott) "knows me, and can tell you that 'Jimmy Ah San' never broke a promise to any man."

"That is right enough," said Scott promptly; "every one in Gympie knew you when you was storekeepin' there, and said you was a good sort."

"We have come over three hundred miles from the Cloncurry," went on the Chinese leader, quickly seeing that Scott's remark had much impressed the other miners; "the diggers there gave us forty-eight hours to clear out. The blacks killed fifteen of us and speared ten of my horses, and six more men died on the way. We can do no harm here. We only want to spell a week, or two weeks."

"Poor devils!" muttered Grainger; then he said to Ah San: "Very well. Now, you see the track going through that clump of sandalwood? Well, follow it and you'll come to a little ironstone ridge, where you'll find a good camping-ground just over a big pool in the creek. There's a bit of sweet grass, too, for your horses, so they can get a good feed to-night. In the morning this black boy will, if you like, show you a place in the ranges, about four miles from here, where you can let them run for a week. There's some fine grass and plenty of water, and they ought to pick up very quickly. But you will have to keep some one to see that they don't get round the other side of the range—through one of the gaps; if they do, you'll lose them to a dead certainty, for there are two or three mobs of brumbies * running there. Do you want any tucker?" †

* Wild horses. † Provisions.

"No, thank you," replied Ah San, with an unmistakable inflexion of gratitude in his voice; "we have plenty of rice and tea, but I should like to buy a bullock to-morrow, if I can—I saw some cattle about two miles from here. Is there a cattle station near here?"

"No. The cattle you saw belong to one of us—this man here," pointing to Jansen, "will sell you a beast to-morrow, I daresay."

Then the armed protectors of the integrity from foreign invasion of the rights of Chinkie's Flat nodded "Good evening" to Ah San, and walked back across the road to the "Digger's Rest," and the Chinamen, with silent, child-like patience, resumed their loads and trotted along after their leader. They disappeared over the hill, and ere darkness descended the glare of their camp fires was casting steady gleams of light upon the dark waters of the still pool beneath the ridge.

## CHAPTER IV

### GRAINGER AND JIMMY AH SAN TALK TOGETHER

IT was eight o'clock in the morning, and Jimmy Ah San, a fat, pleasant-faced Chinaman, dressed in European costume, came outside his tent, and filling his pipe, sat down on the ground, and with his hands clasped on his knees, saw six of the white men emerge from two or three humpies, and walk down to the new shaft to begin work.

He was well acquainted with the previous history of the spot upon which he was now gazing, and something like a scowl darkened his good-humoured face as he looked upon the ragged, half-famished survivors of his company, and thought of the past horrors and hardships of the fearful journey from the Cloncurry. Fifteen of their number had been murdered by blacks in less than a fortnight, and the bones of half a dozen more, who had succumbed to exhaustion or thirst lay bleaching on a strip of desert country between the Cloncurry and the Burdekin River.

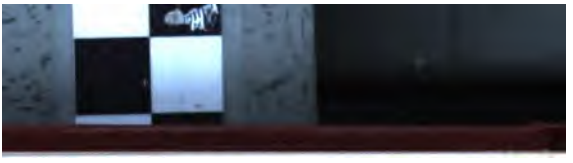
But Ah San was a man of courage—and resource as well—and his five-and-twenty years' experience of bush and mining life in the Far North of Australia enabled

him to pilot the remainder of his men by forced marches to the Cape River, where they had spelled for a month so as to gain strength for the long stage between that river and Conolly's Creek, on one of the deserted fields of which he hoped to settle and retrieve his broken fortunes.

As he sat and watched and thought, eight or ten members of his company came and crouched near him, gazing with hungry eyes at the heaps of mullock and the mounds of tailings surrounding the "Ever Victorious" battery, watching the Europeans at work, and wondering when they, too, would give it up and follow their departed comrades. For the Chinamen knew that those dry and dusty heaps of mullock and grey and yellow sand, on which the death adder and the black-necked tiger snake now coiled themselves to sleep in the noon-day sun, still contained gold enough to reward patient industry—industry of which the foreign-devils were not capable when the result would be but five pennyweights a day, washed out in the hot waters of the creek under a sky of brass, "with flour at two-pounds-ten per 50 lb. bag," as Dick Scott said.

Presently, turning to a sun-baked, lanky Chinaman near him—his lieutenant—he bade him tell the men to prepare to go down to the Creek, and drag some of the pools with a small seine.

"There are many fish in all these creeks which run into the great river" (the Burdekin), "but I will first go to the foreigners and ask their permission. The tall, sick man is well disposed towards us, and we must be patient and submit to the tyranny of the others for a little while.





But all may yet be well with us if I can but get speech of him alone. Meanwhile, keep the company under close watch; let no man wander from the camp till I return."

Then entering his tent, he took from a canvas pack-bag a small bottle, put it in his coat pocket, and, descending the ridge, walked towards the "Digger's Rest."

As he drew near, Grainger, followed by the landlord, came out of the house and sat down on rudely made reclining chairs, composed of two pieces of sapling, with cross-pieces, from which was slung a flour sack.

"Good morning, gentlemen," said the Chinaman politely.

"Good morning," they replied civilly, and then Grainger, who was wearing a heavy overcoat, for the chill of an attack of ague was near, asked him to sit down and inquired how his men were.

"They are getting on very well, thank you, sir," replied Ah San, "but several of them are very weak, and will not be fit to travel for a fortnight unless we carry them. But the rest will do them much good, especially if they get a change of food. I have come now to ask you if you and your mates will let us drag some of the pools in the creek for fish. We have a small net."

"Certainly," replied Jansen; "some fish will do them good, and the pools are alive with them now that the creek is so low. And anyway, we don't want to stop you from getting food—do we, Mr. Grainger?"

"Certainly not; we have no earthly right to prevent

you from taking fish in the creek, and even if we had we should not use it. We are not brutes."

"Thank you very much," said Ah San—and then, addressing himself to the landlord, he asked him if he had a bullock to sell.

Jansen was an alert business man at once. He had a small herd of cattle running wild about the creek, and was only too glad to sell a beast.

"You can have any bullock you like—the biggest in the lot—for a fiver—but, cash down."

The Chinaman pulled out his purse, handed him a five-pound note, and asked when he could have the beast.

"In about an hour, if you want to kill right off; but you ought not to kill till sundown in such weather as this. But, anyway, I'll saddle up and get a man to help me run the mob into the stockyard. Then you can pick one out for yourself—there's half a dozen bullocks, and some fine young fat cows, so you can have your choice."

In a few minutes the landlord had caught and saddled two horses, and riding one, and leading the other, he went off to the new shaft, where the spare horse was mounted by one of the men working there.

Then Ah San turned to the sick man, and said interrogatively—

"You have fever?"

"Yes. I caught it up Normanton way in the Gulf Country six months ago, and thought I was getting clear of it, but a month back it came on again, and I have been pretty bad *ever since.*"

"I can see that, and the Gulf kind of fever is bad—very bad. I know all about it, for I lived in the Gulf Country for ten years, and have had it myself. Now, here is some medicine which will do you good—it will cure you in ten days if you take a dose every time you feel the 'shakes' coming on. But you must not eat more than you can help."

"Thank you," said Grainger eagerly, as he took the bottle; "it is very kind of you. But you may want it yourself?"

"I have three or four more bottles left. I had a dozen from the doctor at Georgetown on the Etheridge River. He is a man who knows all about fever, and I can assure you that you will be a well man in ten days. Show me your hand, please."

The European extended his hand languidly to the Chinaman, who looked at the finger-nails for a moment or two: "You will have the 'shakes' in a few hours."

"Yes. They generally come on as soon as the sun gets pretty high—about nine or ten o'clock."

"Then you must take a dose now. Can I go inside and get a glass and some water?"

"Yes, certainly. It is very good of you to take so much trouble."

Returning with a glass and some water, the Chinaman poured out a dose of the mixture, and with a smile of satisfaction watched the sick man drink it.

Then Grainger and his visitor began to talk, at first on general matters such as the condition of the country between the Cloncurry and the Burdekin, and then about Chinkie's Flat, its past glories and its present

condition. The frank, candid manner of Ah San evoked a similar freedom of speech from the Englishman, who recognised that he was talking to an intelligent and astute man who knew more about the Far North of Qeeensland and its gold-fields than he did himself.

Then Ah San saw the opportunity for which he had been waiting, and drawing his seat nearer to Grainger's he spoke earnestly to him, told him exactly of the situation of himself and his company, and ended up by making him a certain proposition regarding the working of the abandoned claims, and the restarting of the rusting and weather-worn "Ever Victorious" battery.

Grainger listened intently, nodding his head now and then as Ah San emphasised some particular point. At the end of an hour's conversation they heard the cracking of the landlord's stock whip and the bellowing of cattle as they crossed the creek, and the Chinaman rose and held out his hand.

"Then good morning, Mr. Grainger. I hope you will be able to convince your mates that we can all pull together."

"I am sure of it. We are all pretty hard up. And you and your men can help us, and we can help you. Come down again to-night, and I'll tell you the result of my talk with them."

## CHAPTER V

### THE RESURRECTION OF THE "EVER VICTORIOUS"

AT six o'clock in the evening, Grainger was seated at one end of the rough dining-table in the "Digger's Rest" with some papers laid before him. At the other end was Dick Scott, and the rest of the men sat on either side, smoking their pipes, and wondering what was in the wind.

Grainger did not keep them waiting long. Taking his pipe out of his mouth, and laying it on the table, he went into business at once. He spoke to them as if he were one of themselves, adopting a simplicity of language and manner that he knew would appeal to their common sense and judgment far more than an elaborately prepared speech.

"Now, boys, I've got something to say, and I'll say it as quick as I can. None of you know anything of me beyond what I have told you myself; but I don't think any one of you will imagine I'm a man who would try to ring in a swindle on you when I bought the old rattletrap down there?"

"Go ahead, mister," said Dick Scott, "we didn't think no such thing. We on'y thought you was chuckin' away your money pernicious."

Grainger laughed so heartily that his hearers followed suit. Then he went on—

"No. I'm not throwing my money away, boys. I am going to *make* money on this field, and so are you. But there are not enough of us. We want more men—wages' men; and presently I'll explain *why* we shall want them. But first of all, let me show you what I obtained the other day out of between 200 and 250 lbs. weight of those tailings."

He rose, went into the second room, and returned with a small enamelled dish, and placed it upon the table. The miners rose and gathered round, and saw lying on the bottom about an ounce and a quarter of fine powdery gold.

"Holy Moses!" cried one of them, as he drew his forefinger through the bright, yellow dust, "there's more than an ounce there."

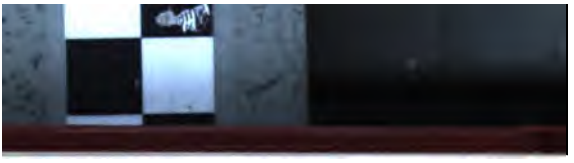
"There is," affirmed Grainger: "there are twenty-five pennyweights, and all that came out of not more than 250 lbs. of tailings!"

The men looked at each other with eyes sparkling with excitement, and then Grainger poured the gold out upon a clean plate for closer examination.

"Why," exclaimed Scott, "that means those tailings would go ten ounces to the ton!"

"Just so," said Grainger, "but we can't get those ten ounces out of them by ordinary means, though with new screens, new tables and blankets I am pretty sure we can get four ounces to the ton. But we want the ten, don't we?"

"You bet," was the *unanimous* response.





"Well, I'll guarantee that we shall get eight ounces at least. But first of all I'll tell you how I got the result. You can try some of the stuff in the morning, and you will find that those tailings will pan out about eight or ten ounces to the ton."

"But acid is mighty dear stuff," said Scott.

"Just so, but it is very good as a test, and of course we are not such duffers as to try to treat more than a couple of thousand tons of tailings with acid. We'd die of old age before we finished. Now, I'll get on and tell you what I do propose. You remember that I said I had seen tailings treated in Victoria without roasting. Well, we could do that now, though we should only get half the gold and lose the other half in the sludge pits. Now, as I told you, I have about four hundred pounds' worth of alluvial gold, which I brought with me from the north, and which I can sell to any bank in the Bay. I intended when I bought the 'Ever Victorious' to spend this £400 in buying some fine screens, a couple of grinding pans, and some other gold-saving machinery, so that when I was not crushing stone for you men I could be running those tailings through. But we can do better—now that the Chinamen are here."

Something like dismay was depicted on the men's faces when they heard this, but no one interrupted as he went on—

"We can do much better. Instead of treating those tailings by simply running them through the screens again and losing half the gold, we can build a proper roasting furnace, and *then* we can grind them, keeping

the stampers for crushing alone. This morning I had a long yarn with Ah San, the boss Chinaman, and he is willing to let us have as many of his men as we want for twenty-five shillings a week each, and indenture them to me for six months—there's the labour we want, right to our hand. It's cheap labour, I admit, but that is no concern of ours. The Chows, so Ah San tells me, will be only too glad to get a six months' job at twenty-five bob a week—of which he takes half."

"Aye," said Scott contemptuously, "they're only bloomin' slaves."

"To their boss, no doubt; but not to us. They will be well pleased to work for us and earn what they consider good wages. I propose that we get at least twenty of them and set them to work right away. There is any amount of good clay here, I know, and we'll start them digging. I know how to build a brick-kiln, and we'll get a proper bricklayer up from the Bay, and I guarantee that by the time the new machinery is up that the roasting furnace will be built."

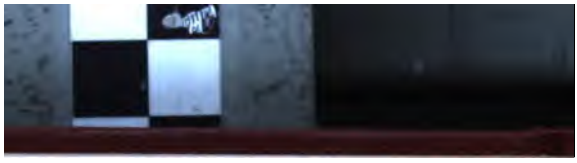
"No need to get a bricklayer from the Bay and pay him about eight pound a week," said a man named Arthur O'Hare; "I'm a bricklayer by trade."

"Bully for you," said Grainger; "will you take four pounds a week to put up the furnace and chimney?"

"I'm willing, if my mates are."

"Well, boys, that's pretty well all I have to say. We'll build the roasting furnace; the Chinamen will do all the bullocking* both at that and the battery,

* "Bullocking"—*hard work—i.e., to work like bullocks in a team.*





and we'll put on half-a-dozen to help at the new shaft. I'll boss the battery, drive the engine, and do the amalgamating, and you men can go on roasting stone. Every Saturday we'll stop the battery and clean her up, and at the end of every four weeks we'll send the gold to the bank and go shares in the plunder. Now, tell me, what do you think? Do you think it's a fair proposition?"

After a very brief consultation together, Scott, speaking on behalf of his mates, said they were all willing, and not only willing, but pleased to "come in" with him, but they thought that he would only be acting fairly to himself if he, as manager of the battery, amalgamator, and general supervisor of the whole concern, took a salary of ten pounds a week.

"No, boys. I'll take six pounds if you like. Of course, however, you will not object to refunding me the money I am expending on the new machinery. As for the profits, we shall divide equally.

"Well then," said Scott, banging his brawny fist on the table and turning to his mates, "if you treats us in that generous way, we must do the same with you as regards the stone we raise. Boys, I proposes that as our new mate is finding the money to start the old battery again, and going even shares with us in the gold from the tailings, that we go even shares with him in whatever gold we get from the claims."

"Right," was the unanimous response. And then they all came up one by one and shook hands with Grainger, whose face flushed with pleasure. Then

Jansen produced a bottle of rum and Grainger gave them a toast—

"Boys, here's good luck to us all, and here's to the day when we shall hear the stampers banging away in the boxes and the 'Ever Victorious' be as victorious as she was in the good old days of the field."

## CHAPTER VI

### "MAGNETIC VILLA"

"MAGNETIC VILLA" was one of the "best" houses in the rising city of Townsville. It stood on the red, rocky, and treeless side of Melton Hill, overlooked the waters of Cleveland Bay, and faced the rather picturesque-looking island from whence it derived its name.

About ten months after the resurrection of the "Ever Victorious" and the concomitant reawakening to life of Chinkie's Flat, three ladies arrived by steamer from Sydney to take possession of the villa—then untenanted. In a few hours it was generally known that the newcomers were Mrs. Trappème, Miss Trappème, and Miss Lilla Trappème. There was also a Master Trappème, a lanky, ill-looking, spotted-faced youth of fourteen, in exceedingly new and badly-fitting clothes much too large for him. By his mother and sisters he was addressed as "Mordaunt," though until a year or so previously his name had been Jimmy.

A few weeks after the ladies had installed themselves in the villa there appeared a special advertisement in

the Townsville *Champion* (over the leader) informing the public that "Mrs. Lee-Trappème is prepared to receive a limited number of paying guests at 'Magnetic Villa.' Elegant appointments, superior *cuisine*, and that comfort and hospitality which can Only be obtained in a Highly-refined Family Circle."

"Hallo!" said Mallard, the editor of the *Champion*, to Flynn, his sub, who called his attention to the advertisement, "so 'Magnetic Villa' is turned into a hash house, eh? Wonder who they are? 'Highly refined family circle'—sounds fishy, doesn't it? Do you know anything about them?"

"No, but old Maclean, the Melbourne drummer who came up in the *Barcoo* from Sydney with them, does—at least he knew the old man, who died about a year and a half ago."

"What was he?"

"Bank messenger in Sydney at thirty bob a week; used to lend money to the clerks at high interest, and did very well; for when he pegged out he left the old woman a couple of thousand. His name was Trappem—John Trappem, but he was better known as 'Old Jack Trap.' When they came on board the *Barcoo* they put on no end of side, and they were 'Mrs., the Misses, and Master Lee-Trappème.'"

"Lord! what a joke! Did the drummer give the show away on board?"

"No, for a wonder. But he told me of it."

"Daughters good looking?"

"Younger one is not too bad; elder's a terror—thin, bony, long face, long nose, long feet, long conceit of

herself, and pretty long age, walks mincingly, like a hen on a hot griddle, and——"

"Oh, stop it! The old woman?"

"Fat, ruddy-faced, pleasant-looking, white hair, talks of her 'poor *papaless* girls,' &c. She's a pushing old geyser, however, and has already got the parsons and some of the other local nobility to call on her."

"Wonder what sort of tucker they'd give one, Flynn? I'm tired of paying £6 a week at the beastly overcrowded dog-kennel, entitled the 'Royal' Hotel—save the mark!—and I'm game even to try a boarding-house, but," and here he rubbed his chin, "this 'refined family circle' business, you know?"

"They all say that," remarked the sub. "You couldn't expect 'em to tell the truth and say, 'In Paradise Mansions Mrs. de Jones feeds her boarders on anything cheap and nasty; the toilet jugs have no handles, and the floors are as dirty as the kitchen slave, who does the cooking and waits at table, and the family generally are objectionable in their manners and appearance.'"

"Are you game to come with me this afternoon and inspect 'Magnetic Villa' and the 'refined family circle'?"

"Yes. And, by Jove! if you take up your quarters there, I will do so as well. We could try it, anyway. I'm batching with Rattray, the police inspector, and three other fellows. It was only going to cost us £3 a week each; it costs us more like £6."

"Of course, too much liquor, and all that," said the editor of the *Champion*, with a merry twinkle in his eye.

Scarcely had the sub-editor left when a knock an-

nounced another visitor, and Grainger, booted and spurred, entered the room.

Mallard jumped from his chair and shook hands warmly with him. "This is a surprise, Grainger. When did you get to town?"

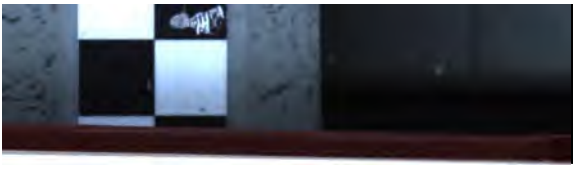
"About an hour ago. Myra is with me; her six months' visit has come to an end, and my mother and my elder sister want her back again; so she is leaving in the next steamer. But all the hotels are packed full, and as the steamer does not leave for a week, I don't know how to manage. That's why I came to see you, thinking you might know of some place where we could put up for a week."

"I shall be only too delighted to do all I can. The town is very full of people just now, and the hotels are perfect pandemoniums, what with Chinkie's Flat, the rush to the Haughton, Black Gully, and other places Townsville is off its head with bibulous prosperity, and lodgings of any kind fit for a lady are unobtainable. Ah, stop! I've forgotten something. I do know of a place which might suit Miss Grainger very well. Where is she now?"

"In the alleged sitting-room at the 'Queen's.' I gave the head waiter a sovereign to let her have it to herself for a couple of hours whilst I went out and saw what I could do."

Then Mallard told Grainger of "Magnetic Villa."

"Let us go and see this refined family," he said with a laugh. "I don't know them, but from what my sub tells me, I daresay Miss Grainger could manage with them for a week. I know the house, which has two





advantages: it is large, and is away from this noisy, dirty, dusty, and sinful town."

"Very well," said Grainger, as he took out his pipe, "will three o'clock suit? My sister might come."

"Of course. Now tell me about Chinkie's Flat. Any fresh news?"

"Nothing fresh; same old thing."

"'Same old thing!'" and Mallard spread out his arms yearningly and rolled his eyes towards the ceiling. "Just listen to the man, O ye gods! 'The same old thing!' That means you are making a fortune hand over fist, you and Jimmy Ah San."

"We are certainly making a lot of money, Mallard," replied Grainger quietly, as he lit his pipe and crossed his strong, sun-tanned hands over his knee. "My own whack, so far, out of Chinkie's Flat, has come to more than £16,000."

"Don't say 'whack,' Grainger; it's vulgar. Say 'My own emolument, derived in less than one year from the auriferous wealth of Chinkie's Flat, amounts to £16,000.' You'll be going to London soon, and floating the property for a million, and——"

Grainger, who knew the man well, and had a sincere liking and respect for him, laughed again, though his face flushed. "You know me better than that, Mallard; I'm not the man to do that sort of thing. I could float the concern and make perhaps a hundred thousand or so out of it if I was blackguard enough to do it. But, thank God, I've never done anything dirty in my life, and never will."

"Don't mind my idiotic attempt at a joke, Grainger,"

and Mallard put out his hand. "I know you are the straightest man that ever lived. But I did really think that you would be going off to England soon, and that we—I mean the other real friends beside myself you have made in this God-forsaken colony—would know you no more except by reading of your 'movements' in London."

"No, Mallard, Australia is my home. I know nothing of England, for I left there when I was a child. As I told you, my poor father was one of the biggest sheep men in Victoria, and died soon after the bank foreclosed on him. The old station, which he named 'Melinda Downs,' after my mother, who has the good old-fashioned name of Melinda, has gone through a lot of vicissitudes since then; but a few weeks ago my agent in Sydney bought it for £10,000, and now my mother and sisters are going back there."

"And yourself?"

"Oh, a year or two more—perhaps three or four; and then, when Chinkie's Flat is worked out, I too, will go south to the old home."

Mallard sighed, and then, taking a cigar, lit it, and the two men smoked together in silence for a few minutes.

"Mallard!"

"Yes, old man."

"This continual newspaper grind is pretty tough, isn't it?"

"Yes, it is. But thanks to you—by putting me on to the 'Day Dawn' Reef at Chinkie's Flat—I've made a thousand or two and can chuck it at any time."

"Don't *say 'chuck.' It's* vulgar; and the editor of

the 'leading journal in North Queensland' must not be vulgar," and he smiled.

"Ah, Grainger my boy, you have been a good friend to me!"

"It's the other way about, Mallard. You were the only man in the whole colony of Queensland who stood to me when I began to employ Chinese labour. That ruffian, Peter Finnerty, said in the House, only two months ago, that I deserved to be shot."

"Well, you stuck to your guns, and I to mine. Fortunately the *Champion* is my own 'rag,' and not owned by a company. I stuck to you as a matter of principle."

"And lost heavily by it."

"For six months or so. A lot of people withdrew their advertisements; but they were a bit surprised when at the end of that time they came back to me, and I refused to insert their ads. at any price. I consider that you not only did wisely, but right, in employing the Chinamen. Are they going on satisfactorily?"

"Very; they do work for me at twenty-five shillings a week that white men would not do at all—no matter what you offered them: emptying sludge-pits, building dams, etc."

"Exactly! And now all the people who rose up and howled at you for employing Chinamen, and the *Champion* for backing you up, are shouting themselves hoarse in your praise. And the revival of Chinkie's Flat, and the new rushes all round about it, have added very materially to the wealth of this town."

After a little further conversation, Grainger went back

to the Queen's Hotel, where Mallard was to call at three o'clock.

Myra Grainger, a small, slenderly-built girl of nineteen, looked up as he entered the sitting-room.

"Any success, Ted?"

"Here, look at this advertisement. Mallard knows the place, but not the people. He's coming here at three, and we'll all go and interview Mrs. Trappème—'which her real name is Trappem,' I believe."

"I shall be glad to see Mr. Mallard again. I like him—in fact, I liked him before I ever saw him for the way in which he fought for you."

"And I'm strongly of the opinion that Mr. Thomas Mallard has a very strong liking for Miss Myra Grainger."

"Then I like him still more for that."

Grainger patted his sister's cheek. "He is a good fellow, Myra. I think he will ask you to marry him."

"I certainly expect it, Ted."

## CHAPTER VII

### SHEILA CAROLAN

ALTHOUGH Mrs. Trappème had been so short a time in Townsville, she had contrived to learn a very good deal, not only about people in the town itself, but in the surrounding districts, and knew that Grainger was a wealthy mine-owner, had a sister staying with him on a visit—and was a bachelor. She also knew that Mallard was the editor of the *Champion*, and was likewise a bachelor—in fact, she had acquired pretty well all the information that could be acquired; her informant being the talkative, scandal-mongering wife of the Episcopalian curate.

She was therefore highly elated when at four o'clock in the afternoon Miss Grainger and her brother, and Mallard, after a brief inspection of the rooms—which were really handsomely furnished—took three of the largest and a private sitting-room, at an exorbitant figure, for a week, and promised to be at the Villa that evening for dinner.

"He's immensely rich, Juliette," she said to her daughter (she was speaking of Grainger after he had gone), "and you must do your best, your very best. Wear something very simple, as it is the first evening;

and be particularly nice to his sister—I'm sure he's very fond of her. She'll only be here a week, but he and Mr. Mallard will probably be here a month. So now you have an excellent chance. Don't throw it away by making a fool of yourself."

Juliette (who had been christened Julia, and called "Judy" for thirty-two years of her life) set her thin lips and then replied acidly—

"It's all very well for you to talk, but whenever I did have a chance — which was not often — you spoilt it by your interference. And if you allow Jimmy to sit at the same table with us to-night he'll simply disgust these new people. When you call him 'Mordaunt' the hideous little wretch grins; and he grins too when you call me 'Juliette' and Lizzie 'Lilla.'"

Mrs. Trappème's fat face scowled at her daughter, and she was about to make an angry retort when the front-door bell rang.

"A lady wants to see yez, ma'am," said the "new chum" Irish housemaid, who had answered the door.

"Did you show her into the reception room, Mary?"

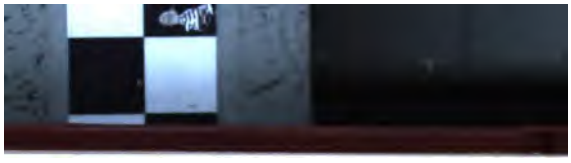
"Sure, an' is it the wee room wid the sthuffed burd in the fireplace, or is it the wan beyant wid the grane carpet on de flure; becos' I'm after puttin' her in the wan wid the sthuffed burd? Anny way it's a lady she is, sure enough; an' it's little she'll moind where she do be waitin' on yez."

"Did she send in her card, Mary?"

"Did she sind in her *what?*"

"Her card, you stupid girl."

"Don't you be *after miscallin'* me, ma'am. Sure I can





get forty shillings a wake annywhere an' not be insulted by anny wan, instead av thirty here, which I do be thinkin' is not the place to shuit me"—and the indignant daughter of the Emerald Isle, a fresh-complexioned, handsome young woman, tossed her pretty head and marched out.

So Mrs. Trappème went into the room "wid the sthuffed burd in it," and there rose to meet her a fair-haired girl of about eighteen, with long-lashed, dark-grey eyes, and a somewhat worn and drawn expression about her small mouth, as if she were both mentally and physically tired. Her dress was of the simplest—a neatly fitting, dark-blue, tailor-made gown.

"I saw your advertisement in the *Champion* this morning," she said, "and called to ascertain your terms."

Mrs. Trappème's big, protruding, and offensive pale-blue eyes stared at and took in the girl's modest attire and her quiet demeanour as a shark looks at an unsuspecting or disabled fish which cannot escape its maws.

"Please sit down," she said with a mingled ponderous condescension and affability. "I did not *advertise*. I merely *notified* in the *Champion* that I would receive paying guests. But my terms are very exclusive."

"What are they?"

"Five guineas a week exclusive of extras, which, in this place, amount to quite a guinea more. You could not afford that, I suppose?"

The dark-grey eyes flashed, and then looked steadily at those of the fishy blue.

"Your terms are certainly very high, but I have no

option. I find it impossible to get accommodation in Townsville. I only arrived from Sydney this morning in the *Corea*, and as I am very tired, I should like to rest in an hour or so—as soon as you can conveniently let me have my room," and taking out her purse she placed a £5 note, a sovereign, and six shillings on the table.

"Will you allow me to pay you in advance?" she said, with a tinge of sarcasm in her clear voice. "I will send my luggage up presently."

Mrs. Trappème at once became most affable. She had noticed that the purse the girl had produced was literally stuffed with new £5 notes.

"May *I* send for it?" she said beamingly, "and will you not stay and go to your room now?"

"No, thank you," was the cold reply, "I have some business to attend to first. Can you tell me where Mr. Mallard, the editor of the *Champion*, lives? I know where the office is, but as it is a morning paper, I should not be likely to find him there at this early hour."

Mrs. Trappème was at once devoured with curiosity. "How very extraordinary! Mr. Mallard was here only half an hour ago with a Mr. Grainger and Miss Grainger. They are coming here to stay for a few weeks."

The girl's fair face lit up. "Oh, indeed! I am sorry I was not here, as I particularly wish to see Mr. Grainger also. I had no idea that he was in Townsville, and was calling on Mr. Mallard—who, I know, is a friend of his—to ascertain when he was likely to be in town."

"They will all be here for dinner, Miss——"

"My name *is Carolan,*" and taking out her card-

case she handed Mrs. Trappème a card on which was inscribed, "Miss Sheila Carolan."

"Then Mr. Grainger is a friend of yours?" said Mrs. Trappème inquisitively, thinking of the poor chance Juliette would have with such a Richmond in the field as Miss Sheila Carolan.

"No, I have never even seen him," said the girl stiffly, and then she rose.

"Then you will send for my luggage, Mrs. Trappème?"

"With pleasure, Miss Carolan. But will you not look at your room, and join my daughter and myself in our afternoon tea?"

"No, thank you. I think I shall first try and see either Mr. Mallard or Mr. Grainger. Do you know where Mr. Mallard lives?"

"At the Royal Hotel in Flinders Street. My daughter Lilla will be delighted to show you the way."

But Miss Sheila Carolan was stubborn, and declined the kind offer, and Mrs. Trappème, whose curiosity was now at such a pitch that she was beginning to perspire, saw her visitor depart, and then called for Juliette.

"I wonder who she is and what she wants to see Mr. Grainger for?" she said excitedly, as she mopped her florid face: "doesn't know him, and yet wants to see him particularly. There is something mysterious about her."

"What is she like?" asked Miss Trappème eagerly. "I didn't see her face, but her clothes are all right, I can tell you." (She knew all about clothes, having been a forewoman in a Sydney drapery establishment for many years.)

"Oh, a little, common-looking thing, but uppish. I wonder what on earth she *does* want to see Mr. Grainger for?"

Half an hour later, when Miss Carolan's luggage arrived, it was duly inspected and criticised by the whole Trappème family. Each trunk bore a painted address: "Miss Carolan, Minerva Downs, Dalrymple, North Queensland."

"Now where in the world is Minerva Downs?" said Mrs. Trappème, "and why on earth is she going there? And her name too—Carolan—Sheila Carolan! I suppose she's a Jewess."

"Indade, an' it's not that she is, ma'am, whatever it manes," indignantly broke in Mary, who had helped to carry in the luggage, and now stood erect with flaming face and angry eyes. "Sure an' I tould yez she was a lady, an' anny wan cud see she was a lady, an' Carolan is wan av the best names in Ireland—indade it is."

"You may leave the room, Mary," said Miss Trappème loftily.

"Lave the room, is it, miss? Widout maning anny disrespect to yez, I might as well be telling yez that I'm ready to lave the place intirely, an' so is the cook an' stableman, an' the gardener. Sure none av us—having been used to the gintry—want to sthay in a place where we do be getting talked at all day."

The prospect of all her servants leaving simultaneously was too awful for Mrs. Trappème to contemplate. So she capitulated.

"Don't be so hasty, Mary. I suppose, then, that Miss Carolan is an Irishwoman?"

"She is that, indade. Sure an' her swate face tould me so before she spoke to me at all, at all."

"Then you must look after her wants very carefully, Mary. She will only be here for a few weeks."

Mary's angry eyes softened. "I will that ma'am. Sure she's a sweet young lady wid the best blood in her, I'm thinkin'."

Miss Trappème sniffed.

## CHAPTER VIII

### MYRA AND SHEILA

THERE was nothing mysterious about Sheila Carolan; her story was a very simple one. Her parents were both dead, and she had no relatives, with the exception of an aunt, and with her she had lived for the last five years. The two, however, did not agree very well, and Sheila being of a very independent spirit, and possessing a few hundred pounds of her own, frankly told her relative that she intended to make her own way in the world. There was living in North Queensland a former great friend of her mother's—a Mrs. Farrow, whose husband was the owner of a large cattle station near Dalrymple—and to her she wrote asking her if she could help her to obtain a situation as a governess. Six weeks later she received a warmly worded and almost affectionate letter.

"MY DEAR SHEILA,—Why did you not write to me long, long ago, and tell me that you and your Aunt Margaret did not get on well together! I remember as a girl that she was somewhat 'crotchetty.' I am not going to write you a long letter. *I want you to come to us.* Be my children's governess—and I really do want a governess for them—but remember that you are coming to your mother's friend and schoolmate, and that although you will receive £100 a year—if

that is too little let us agree for £150—it does not mean that you will be anything else to me but the daughter of your dear mother. Now I must tell you that Minerva Downs is a difficult place to reach, and that you will have to ride all the way from Townsville—250 miles—but that will be nothing to an Australian-born girl 'wid Oirish blood in her.' When you get to Townsville call on Mr. Mallard, the editor of the *Champion*, who is a friend of ours (I've written him), and he will 'pass' you on to another friend of ours, a Mr. Grainger, who lives at a mining town called Chinkie's Flat, ninety miles from here, and Mr. Grainger (don't lose your heart to him, and defraud my children of their governess) will 'pass' you on with the mailman for Minerva Downs. The enclosed will perhaps be useful (it is half a year's salary in advance), and my husband and *all* my large and furious family of rough boys and rougher girls will be delighted to see you.

"Very sincerely yours, my dear Sheila,

"NORA FARROW."

With the letter was enclosed a cheque for £50 on a Sydney bank.

As the girl descended Melton Hill into hot, dusty, and noisy Flinders Street, she smiled to herself as she thought how very much she had stimulated the curiosity of Mrs. Trappème—to whom she had, almost unconsciously, taken an instinctive dislike.

As she entered the crowded vestibule of the Royal Hotel, a group of men—diggers, sugar planters, storekeepers, bankers, ship captains, and policemen, who were all laughing hilariously at some story which was being told by one of their number—at once made a lane for her to approach the office, for ladies—especially young and pretty ladies—were few in comparison to the men in North Queensland in those days, and a murmured whisper of admiration was quite audible to her as she made her inquiry of the clerk.

"No; Mr. Mallard is with Mr. and Miss Grainger at the 'Queen's.' He left here a few minutes ago."

"May I show you the way, miss?" said a huge bearded man, who, booted and spurred, took off his hat to her in an awkward manner. "I'm Dick Scott, one of Mr. Grainger's men."

"Thank you," replied Sheila, "it is very kind of you," and, escorted by the burly digger, she went out into the street again.

"Are you Miss Caroline, ma'am?" said her guide to her respectfully, as he tried to shorten his lengthy strides.

"Yes, my name is Carolan," she replied, trying to hide a smile.

"Thought so, ma'am. I heerd the boss a-tellin' Miss Grainger as you would be a-comin' to Chinkie's on yer way up ter Minervy Downs. Here's the 'Queen's,' miss, an' there's the boss and his sister and Mr. Mallard on the verandah there havin' a cooler," and then, to her amusement and Grainger's astonishment, Mr. Dick Scott introduced her.

"This is Miss Caroline, boss. I picked her up at the 'Royal,'" and then, without another word, he marched off again with a proud consciousness of having "done the perlite thing."

"I am Sheila Carolan, Mr. Grainger. I was at the 'Royal' asking for Mr. Mallard when Mr. Scott kindly brought me here."

"I am delighted to meet you, Miss Carolan," said Grainger, who had risen and extended his hand. "I had not the slightest idea you had arrived." And then he introduced her to his sister and Mallard.

"Now, Miss Carolan, please let me give you a glass

of this—it is simply lovely and cold," said Myra, pouring some champagne into a glass with some crushed ice in it. "My brother is the proud possessor of a big but rapidly diminishing lump of ice, which was sent to him by the captain of the *Corea* just now."

"Thank you, Miss Grainger. I really am very thirsty. I have had quite a lot of walking about to-day. I have a letter to you, Mr. Mallard, from Mrs. Farrow," and she handed the missive to him.

"I am so very sorry I did not know of your arrival, Miss Carolan," said Mallard. "I would have met you on board, but, as a matter of fact, I did not expect you in the *Corea*, as she is a very slow boat."

"I was anxious to get to Mrs. Farrow," Sheila explained, "and so took the first steamer."

"Where are you staying, Miss Carolan?" asked Myra.

"Oh, I've been very fortunate. I have actually secured a room at 'Magnetic Villa,' on Melton Hill; in fact I went there just after you had left."

Myra clapped her hands with delight. "Oh, how lovely! I shall be there for a week, and my brother and Mr. Mallard are staying there as well."

"So Mrs. Lee Trappème informed me," said Sheila with a bright smile.

Mallard—an irrepressible joker and mimic—at once threw back his head, crossed his hands over his chest, and bowed in such an exact imitation of Mrs. Trappème that a burst of laughter followed.

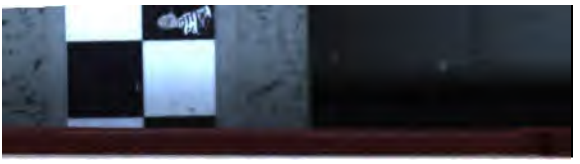
"Now you two boys can run away and play marbles for a while, as Miss Carolan and I want to have a little

talk before we go to the 'refined family circle' for dinner," said Myra to her brother. "It is now six o'clock; our luggage has gone up, and so, if you will come back for us in half an hour, we will let you escort us there—to the envy of all the male population of this horrid, dusty, noisy town."

"Very well," said Grainger with a laugh, "Mallard and I will contrive to exist until then," and the two men went off into the billiard-room.

"Now, Miss Carolan," said the lively Myra, as she opened the door of the sitting-room and carried in the table on which were the glasses, champagne bottle, and ice, "we'll put these inside first. The sight of that ice will make every man who may happen to see it and who knows Ted come and introduce himself to me. Oh, this is a very funny country! I'm afraid it rather shocked you to see me drinking champagne on an hotel verandah in full view of passers-by. But, really, the whole town is excited—it has gold-fever on the brain—and then all the men are so nice, although their free and easy ways used to astonish me considerably at first. But diggers especially are such manly men—you know what I mean."

"Oh, quite. I know I shall like North Queensland. There were quite a number of diggers on board the *Corea*, and one night we held a concert in the saloon and I sang 'The Kerry Dance'—I'm an Irishwoman—and next morning a big man named O'Hagan, one of the steerage passengers, came up and asked me if I would 'moind acceptin' a wee bit av a stone,' and he handed me a lovely specimen of quartz with quite two





ounces of gold in it. He told me he had found it on the Shotover River, in New Zealand. I didn't know what to say or do at first, and then he paid me such a compliment that I fairly tingled all over with vanity. 'Sure an' ye'll take the wee bit av a stone from me, miss,' he said. 'I'm a Kerry man meself, an' when I heard yez singin' "The Kerry Dance," meself and half a dozen more men from the ould sod felt that if ye were a man we'd have carried yez around the deck in a chair.'"

"How nice of him!" said Myra; "but they are all like that. Nearly every one of my brother's men at Chinkie's Flat gave me something in the way of gold specimens when I left there."

"Then," resumed Sheila, "in the afternoon *all* the steerage passengers sent me and the captain what they call a 'round robin,' and asked if he would let them have a concert in the steerage, and if I would sing. And we did have it—on the deck—and I had to sing that particular song *three* times."

"I wish I had been there! Do you know, Miss Carolan, that that big man who brought you here—Dick Scott—rough and uneducated as he is, is a gentleman. On our way down from Chinkie's Flat we had to swim our horses across the Ross River, which was in flood. When we reached the other side I was, of course, wet through, and my hair had come down, and I looked like a half-drowned cat, I suppose. There is a public-house on this side of the Ross, and we went there at once to change our clothes, which were in canvas saddle bags on a pack-horse, and came over dry. The public-

house was full of people, among whom were three commercial travellers, who were doing what is called 'painting the place red'—they were all half-intoxicated. As I came in wet and dripping they leered at me, and one of them said, 'Look at the sweet little ducky—poor little darling—with her pitty ickle facey-wacey all wet and coldy-woldy.' Ted was not near me at the time, but Scott heard, and ten minutes later, as I was changing my clothes, I heard a dreadful noise, and the most *awful* language, and then a lot of cheering. I dressed as quickly as possible and went out into the dining-room, and there on the floor were the three commercial travellers. Their faces looked simply dreadful, smothered in blood, and I felt quite sick. At the other end of the room were a lot of men, miners and stockmen, who were surrounding Dick Scott, slapping him on the back, and imploring him to drink with them. It seems that as soon as I had gone to my room to change, the valiant Dick had told them that the 'drummers' had insulted Mr. Grainger's sister, and in a few minutes the room was cleared and a ring formed, and Dick actually did what the landlord termed 'smashed up the whole three in five minutes.'"

"I'm sure I shall like Mr. Dick Scott," said Sheila. "I had to try hard and not laugh when he pointed to you, and said in his big, deep voice, 'There they are, having a "cooler"'—I thought at first he meant you were cooling yourselves."

"Any drink is called a 'cooler,'" explained Myra; "but, oh dear, how I do chatter! The fact is, I'm so wildly excited, and want to talk so much that I can't

talk fast enough. But I *must* first of all tell you this—I'm really most sincerely glad to meet you, for I feel as if I knew you well. Mrs. Farrow—I spent a week at Minerva Downs—told me you were coming, and that she was longing to see you. I am sure you will be very, very happy with her. She is the most lovable, sweet woman in the world, and when she spoke of your mother her eyes filled with tears. And the children are simply *splendid.* I suppose I am unduly fond of them because they made so much of me, and think that my brother is the finest rider in the world—'and he is that, indade'—isn't that Irish?"

"Yes," said Sheila smilingly, "that is Irish; and I am sure I shall be very happy there."

Myra Grainger, who was certainly, as she had said, wildly excited, suddenly moved her chair close to that on which Sheila sat.

"Miss Carolan, I'm sure that you and I will always be great 'chums'—as they say here in North Queensland—and I'm just dying to tell you of something. Within this last hour I have become engaged to Mr. Mallard! Even Ted doesn't know it yet. Oh, I have heaps and heaps of things to tell you. Can't we have a real, nice long talk to-night?"

"Indeed we can," said Sheila, looking into the girl's bright, happy face.

## CHAPTER IX

### DINNER WITH "THE REFINED FAMILY"

SOMEWHAT to the annoyance of Grainger and his friends, they found on their arrival at "Magnetic Villa" that there were several other visitors there who had apparently come to dine. Whether they were personal friends of Mrs. Trappème or not, or were "paying guests" like themselves, they could not at first discover.

"Dinner will be ready at eight o'clock, Miss Grainger," said Mrs. Trappème sweetly to Myra, who with Sheila had been shown into their private sitting-room; and then she added quickly, as she heard a footstep in the passage, "You have not met my daughter. Come, Juliette, dear —Miss Grainger, my eldest daughter; Miss Carolan, Miss Trappème."

The two girls bowed rather coldly to Miss Trappème, who, after the usual commonplaces, asked Miss Grainger if she were not tired.

"Very—and so is Miss Carolan. We shall be glad of an hour's rest before dinner."

The hint was unmistakable, and Miss Trappème smiled herself out, inwardly raging at what she told her mother was Sheila's forwardness in so soon thrusting herself upon Miss Grainger.

As she went out, Sheila looked at Myra and laughed. "We are certainly meant to be treated as members of the family, whether we like it or not. I wonder if the other people we saw are as pushful as 'Mamma' and 'Juliette.'"

"I trust not; that would be awful—even for a week."

Mallard was in Grainger's room, sprawled out on the bed, talking to him and smoking, whilst the latter was opening a leather trunk which contained some bottles of whisky and soda water, and a small box which held the remains of the ice.

"We can't let this 'melt on us,' as the Irish would say, Mallard," and he placed it in the toilet basin in its covering of blanket. "Now move your lazy self and break a piece off with your knife, whilst I open this bottle of Kinahan's and some soda. I trust the cultured family will not object to the sound of a cork popping at seven o'clock."

"Not they," said Mallard, as he rose; "they would not mind if you took the whisky to the table and drank it out of the bottle. Oh, I can gauge the old dame pretty well, I think; avarice is writ large in her face, and she'll squeeze us all she can. She told me in a mysterious aside that the butler kept all the very best wines and liquor obtainable. I thanked her, and said I usually provided my own. She didn't like it a bit; but I'm not going to pay her a sovereign for a bottle of whisky or Hennessey when I can get a case of either for a five-pound note. "Oh!" he added disgustedly, "they're all alike."

"Well, don't worry, old man," said his friend philo-

sophically, as he handed him a glass; "there, take this. I wonder if Mrs. Trap—Trapper, or whatever her name is, thinks we are going to dress for dinner. Neither my sister nor Miss Carolan will, and I'm sure I'm not going to establish a bad precedent."

"Same here. If other people like to waste time dressing for dinner, let them; this town is altogether too new and thriving a place for busy men like ourselves to worry about evening dress. By the way, Grainger, I've some news for you that I trust will give you pleasure: your sister has promised to marry me next year."

Grainger grasped his friend's hand. "I'm glad, very glad, old man. I was wondering what made her so unusually bright this afternoon; but she has kept it dark."

"Hasn't had a chance to tell you yet. I only asked her a couple of hours ago."

"Well, let us go and see her and Miss Carolan before dinner. I can hear them talking in the sitting-room. Hallo! who is that little fellow out there crossing the lawn with the younger Miss Trappème. He's in full fig."

Mallard looked out of the window and saw a very diminutive man in evening dress.

"Oh, that's little Assheton, the new manager for the Australian Insurance Company. He's just out from England. He's a fearfully conceited ape, but a smart fellow at the insurance business. Great fun at the 'Queen's' the other day with him. He came in, dressed in frock coat, tall hat, and carrying a thick, curly stick as big as himself. Of course every one smiled, and he took it badly—couldn't see what there was to laugh at;

and when old Charteris, the Commissioner, asked him how much he would 'take for the hat,' he put his monocle up and said freezingly, 'Sir, I do not know you.' That made us simply howl, and then, when we had subsided a bit, Morgan the barrister, who is here on circuit with Judge Cooper, said in that funny, deep, rumbling voice of his—

"'Are you, sir, one of the—ah—ah—circus company which—ah—arrived to-day?'

"The poor little beggar was furious, lost his temper, and called us a lot of ill-mannered, vulgar fellows, and then some one or other whipped off the offending hat, threw it into the street, and made a cockshy of it.

"'I'll have satisfaction for this outrage!' he piped. 'Landlord, send for a policeman. I'll give all these men in charge. Your house is very disorderly. Do you know *who* I am?'

"'No, nor do I care,' said old Cramp, down whose cheeks the tears were running; 'but if you'll come here like that every day, I'll give you a sovereign, and we'll have the hat. Oh, you're better than any circus I ever saw. Oh, oh, oh!' and he went off into another fit.

"The poor little man looked at us in a dazed sort of a way—thought us lunatics, and then when old Charteris asked him not to mind a bit of miners' horseplay, but to sit down and have some fizz, he called him 'an audacious ruffian,' and shrieked out—

"'I am Mr. R. D. Assheton—the manager of the Australian Insurance Company. Do you possibly imagine I would drink with a person *like you*?'"

Grainger laughed: "It must have been great fun."

"Rather—but the cream of it is to come yet. He rushed out into Flinders Street, found Sergeant Doyle and a policeman, and came back panting and furious, and pointing to Charteris, told them to take him in charge. Doyle looked at us blankly, saw we were nearly dead with laughing, and then took Assheton aside, and said in his beautiful brogue—

"'Me little mahn, it's drinkin' ye've been. Do yez want me to arrest the Po-liss Magisthrate himsilf? Who are ye at all, at all? Ye'd betther be after goin' home and lyin' down, or I'll lock ye up for making a dishturbance. Do ye moind me now?'"

Grainger could no longer control his laughter, and in the midst of it, Myra tapped vigorously at the door. He rose and opened it.

"Whatever is all this noise about, Ted? You two great boys!"

"Oh, take Mallard away, Myra, for heaven's sake!"

A little before eight o'clock the deafening clamour of a gong announced dinner, and the company filed in. Mrs. Trappème and the Misses Trappème were in "very much evening dress" as Sheila murmured to Myra, and they seemed somewhat surprised that neither Miss Grainger nor Miss Carolan had donned anything more unusual than perfectly-made dainty gowns of cool white Indian muslin. Grainger and Mallard wore the usual white duck suits (the most suitable and favoured dress for a climate like that of torrid North Queensland), and Sheila could not but admire their big well-set-up figures—both were "six feet men"—and contrast their handsome, bronzed and bearded faces with the insig-

nificant appearance of Assheton and another gentleman in evening dress—a delicate but exceedingly gentlemanly young Scotsman. Of course there were more introductions—all of which were duly and unnecessarily carried out by Mrs. Trappème. Others of that lady's guests were the local Episcopalian clergyman and his wife—the former was a placid, dreamy-looking, mild creature, with soft, kindly eyes. He smiled at everybody, was evidently in abject terror of his wife—a hard-featured lady about ten years his senior, with high cheek-bones and an exceedingly corrugated neck and shoulders. She eyed Myra and Sheila with cold dissatisfaction, and after dinner had once begun, devoted herself to the task of extracting information from the latter regarding her future movements. She had already discussed her with Mrs. Trappème, and had informed her hostess that she had "suspicions" about a girl who affected mystery in the slightest degree, and who could afford to pay six guineas a week for simple board and lodging.

"Quite so, Mrs. Wooler," Mrs. Trappème had assented; "I must confess it doesn't look quite right. Even Juliette thinks it very strange for her to be so reticent as to who she is and where she is going. Of course I could have refused to receive her, and am now rather sorry I did not. I understood from her that Mr. Grainger was an utter stranger to her—and I was quite surprised to see them all come in together as if they had known each other for years. Not quite correct, I think."

"Mr. Grainger is very rich," said the clergyman's wife meditatively.

"Very," said her friend, who knew that Mrs. Wooler meant to do a little begging (for church purposes) as soon as opportunity offered.

"It would be a pity for him to be involved with such a—a forward-looking young person," she said charitably.

But for the first quarter of an hour she had no opportunity of satisfying her curiosity, for Sheila was quite hungry enough not to waste too much time in conversation. At last, however, a chance came, when Mr. Assheton said in his mincing voice—

"I believe, Miss Carolan, that like me, you are quite a new arrival in this country."

"Oh, dear no! I have lived here ever since I was two years old."

"Heah! in Townsville?"

"I meant Australia," Sheila observed placidly.

"Then you are not an Australian born, Miss Carolan?" put in Mrs. Wooler with a peculiarly irritating condescension of manner and surprised tone, as if she meant to say, "I am sure you are—you certainly are not lady-like enough to be an English girl."

"No, I am not," was the reply. "Do you think you will like Queensland, Mr. Assheton?"

"I really have as yet formed no definite impression. Possibly I may in the end contrive to like it."

"Do. It would be a great pity for the country if you did not," said Sheila gravely, without moving an eyelid.

"Do you purpose making a long stay in Queensland, Miss Carolan?" pursued Mrs. Wooler.

"A very long one, perhaps—perhaps on the other

hand a very short one. Or it may be that I may adopt a middle course, and do neither."

Grainger, who was opposite, heard her, and as she looked across at him, he saw that she was "playing" her questioner and quite enjoying it.

Never for one moment did the clergyman's wife dream that Sheila meant to be anything else but evasive, so she followed up. To her mind it was absolutely incredible that any woman would dare to snub her—Mrs. Wooler—daughter of a dean, and possessing an uncle who had on several occasions been spoken of by the Bishop of Dullington as his probable successor; such a thing was impossible!

"I presume, however, that your stay in Townsville itself will be short, Miss Carolan? You will find it a very expensive place—especially if you have no friends to whom you can go."

Sheila's face flushed. Her blood was getting up, and Myra looked at her nervously.

"Is there no 'Girls' Friendly Society,' 'Young Women's Christian Association,' or other kindred institution, where I could 'be taken in and done for'?" she asked sweetly.

"Not as yet; but I am thinking of taking steps to found a Girls' Friendly Society. Such an institution will soon be a necessity in a growing place like this."

"How nice it would be for me to go there instead of staying at—at a boarding house!"

Juliette Trappème's sallow face flushed with rage, and Mrs. Trappème, who saw that something was occurring, spoke loudly to Mr. Wooler, who answered in

his usual soft voice. But Mallard, who was seated next to Miss Lilla Trappème, shot Sheila an encouraging glance.

"Quite so," went on Mrs. Wooler. "I disapprove most strongly of any young woman incurring risks that can be avoided."

"What risks?" and Sheila turned and looked steadily at Mrs. Wooler.

The sharp query somewhat upset the inquisitive lady, who hardly knew what she meant herself.

"Oh, the risks of getting into debt—living beyond one's means—and things like that."

"Oh, I see, madam," and Sheila bowed gravely, although the danger signals were showing now on her cheeks. Then she added very clearly and distinctly, "That would be most dreadful to happen to any one, would it not, Mr. Assheton?"

"Oh, howwible—for a lady."

"But," she went on—and as she spoke she gazed so intently into Mrs. Wooler's face that every one at the table saw her change colour—"but I am sure, Mrs. Wooler, that no girl could possibly come to such a sad condition while *you* are in Townsville, to give her the benefit of *your* years, *your* advice, and *your* experience—even though that advice was thrust upon her in a manner that I believe might possibly cause well-deserved resentment," and then, with a scornful smile still on her lips, she turned to Mr. Assheton and asked him sweetly if he did not "think it was beginning to be very warm so early in the year?"

"By heavens!" muttered Mallard to Myra, "she has done the parson woman good. Look at her face. It's unpleasant to look at."

Mrs. Wooler's features were a study. Unable to speak, and her hands trembling with rage, she gave the girl one glance of hatred, and then tried to eat; and Viveash, who had the sense to do so, at once began telling her some idiotic and pointless story about himself when he sang in a cathedral choir until his voice "failed him."

Just then a long ring was heard at the front door, and the butler presently came to Mallard, and said—

"One of the reporters, sir, from the *Champion* wishes to see you. Most important, sir, he says. Will you please see him at once?"

Making his excuses, Mallard left the dining-room and went into one of the sitting-rooms, where the reporter was awaiting him.

## CHAPTER X

### THE "CHAMPION" ISSUES A "SPECIAL"

TEN minutes later Mallard was at the hall door giving instructions to the reporter.

"Hurry back as fast as you can, Winthrop, and tell Mr. Flynn to rush the special through. And as fast as any further news come in rap out another. Get all the boys you can, and distribute the specials everywhere—anywhere. Chuck some over into the cemetery—they'll make the dead 'get up and holler.' Tell the boys that they are not to make any charge—get the foreman to head it 'Special! Gratis! (Any one newsboy who makes a charge for this special will be immediately dismissed.)' See? And tell the boys they will get five shillings each extra in the morning. I'll be down in another twenty minutes or so. Go on, Winthrop, loop!"

Mr. Winthrop, who was as excited as Mallard himself, "looped," and the editor returned to the dining-room with a galley-proof slip in his hand. Every one, of course, saw by his face that something had occurred.

"I won't sit down again, Mrs. Trappème, if you and the other ladies will excuse me, for I have to hurry back

to the office to attend to some important business. There is great news." Then, bending down, he placed his hand on Grainger's shoulder, and whispered, "You must come with me, old man. There is glorious news from Chinkie's. I'll tell you all about it in a minute, as soon as we are outside. Make your apologies and let us go," and then going over to Mrs. Trappème, he handed her the proof to read to her guests and hurried out with Grainger, leaving every one in the room eager to learn what had occurred.

"Oh, dear me!" began Mrs. Lee-Trappème, adjusting her pince-nez, which always interfered with her sight.

"SPECIAL. 'TOWNSVILLE CHAMPION.'

"WRECK.

"9 P.M., *May 2nd.*

"Authentic news has just reached the *Champion* office that the mail steamer *Flintshire* was wrecked on the Great Barrier Reef three days ago (the 5th). All the crew and passengers—200 in number—were saved, and are now on their way to Townsville. [*Further particulars later.*]"

"DREADFUL MASSACRE BY THE NOTORIOUS BLACK OUTLAWS.

"The Cloncurry mail, which has been delayed by floods, brings news of a terrible massacre perpetrated by the outlaw black ex-troopers Sandy and Daylight. A party of five miners who were camped at a lagoon near Dry Creek were surprised and murdered in their sleep by the two outlaws and a number of myall blacks. The bodies were found by the mail man. Inspector Lamington and a patrol of Native Police leave to-morrow to punish the murderers. Detailed particulars of the affair will be given in to-morrow's issue—Mudoch, the mail man, being too exhausted to stand the test of a long interview to-night."

## "CHAMPION" ISSUES "SPECIAL"

**"WONDERFUL GOLD DISCOVERY NEAR CHINKIE'S FLAT.**

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**"A NEW EL DORADO.**

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**"MR. GRAINGER AND HIS PARTNERS THE LUCKY MEN.**

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**"By the Cloncurry mail, which brought intelligence of the tragedy at Dry Creek, also comes most pleasurably exciting news. The 'Ever Victorious Grainger,' as his many friends often designate him, some months ago sent out a prospecting party to try the country near the headwaters of Banshee Creek, with the result that probably the richest alluvial field in Australia has been discovered. Over 2,000 oz. of gold—principally in nuggets ranging from 100 oz. to 2 oz.—have already been taken by Mr. Grainger's party. Warden Charteris, accompanied by an escort of white and black police, leaves for the place to-morrow night. The news of this wonderfully rich field has been two weeks reaching Townsville owing to the flooded condition of the country between Banshee Creek and Chinkie's Flat.**

**"Mr. Grainger is at present in this city on a short visit. His good fortune will benefit the country at large as well as himself and his energetic partners."**

"Dear me, how very exciting to be getting gold so easily!" said Mrs. Trappème, as she laid the proof on the table; "your brother will be delighted, Miss Grainger."

"He will be pleased, of course," assented Myra. "He always had a belief that a rich alluvial gold-field would be discovered in the Banshee Creek country. He sent this particular prospecting party away nearly two months ago."

"What a hawwid story about the murdered diggahs!" said Mr. Assheton to Myra. "Did it occur neah where you were living, Miss Graingah?"

"About a hundred miles further westward, towards

the Minerva Downs district. These two men, Sandy and Daylight, have committed quite a number of murders during the past two years. They killed five or six poor Chinese diggers on the Cloncurry Road last year. They are both well armed, and it is almost impossible to capture them, as they retreat to the ranges whenever pursued."

"They are a most ferocious and desperate pair," said Mr. Wooler, who then told their story, which was this:—

Some two or three years previously Sandy and Daylight, who belonged to one of the Native Police camps in the Gulf district,* had, while out on patrol, urged one of their comrades to join with them in murdering their white officer and then absconding. The other man refused, and, later on in the day, secretly told the officer that he was in great danger of being shot if he rode on ahead of the patrol as usual. As soon as the party returned to camp the two traitors were quietly disarmed, handcuffed, and then chained to a log till the morning. During the night they managed to free themselves (aided, no doubt, by the trooper who was detailed to guard them), killed the man who had refused to join them by cleaving his skull open with a blow from a tomahawk, and then decamped to the ranges with their rifles and ammunition. They found a refuge and safe retreat with the savage myalls (wild blacks) inhabiting the granite ranges, and then began a career of robbery and murder. Small parties of prospectors found it almost impossible to pursue their vocation in

* Gulf of Carpentaria.

the "myall country," for the dreaded ex-troopers and their treacherous and cannibal allies were ever on the watch to cut them off. In the course of a few months, by surprising and killing two unfortunate Chinese packers, the desperadoes became possessed of their repeating rifles and a lot of ammunition, and the old single-shot police carbines were discarded for the more effective weapons. Sandy, who was the leader, was a noted shot, and he and his companion now began to haunt the vicinity of isolated mining camps situated in country of the roughest description. Parties of two or three men who had perhaps located themselves in some almost inaccessible spot would go on working for a few weeks in apparent security, leaving one of their number to guard the camp and horses, and on returning from their toil would find their comrade dead or severely wounded, the camp rifled of everything it contained, and the horses speared; and the hardy and adventurous pioneers would have to retreat to one of the main mining camps, situated perhaps fifty miles away, with nothing left to them but the hard-won gold they had saved and their mining tools, but ready and eager to venture forth again.

One day, so the clergyman related, a man named Potter was travelling from Burketown to Port Denison, and camped beside a small water-hole to rest until the morning. After unsaddling and hobbling out the horse he had been riding, and unloading the pack-horse, he threw his packbags at the foot of a Leichhardt tree, lit a fire, and began to boil a billy of tea. He knew that he was in dangerous country, and that it was

unwise of him to light a fire, but being of a reckless disposition, and having a firm belief in his luck, he took no further precaution beyond opening the flap of his revolver pouch.

He had just taken out a piece of damper and some salt meat, which, with the hot tea, were to be his supper, when he was startled to hear some one address him by name, and looking up, he saw a powerfully-built black fellow with a long black beard and smiling face standing a dozen yards or so away. He was all but nude, but round his waist was buckled a broad leather police belt with two ammunition pouches; in his right hand he carried a repeating rifle.

"Don't you know me, Mr. Potter?" he said in excellent English.

Potter recognised him at once, and the two shook hands.

"Why, you're Sandy! Have you left the police?" (He knew nothing of what had occurred.)

"Yes," was the reply, "I skipped," and carelessly putting his rifle down, he asked Potter if he had any tobacco to spare.

"Yes, I can give you a few plugs," and going to his saddle bags he produced four square plugs of tobacco, which he handed to his visitor, who took them eagerly, at once produced a silver-mounted pipe (probably taken from some murdered digger) filled it, and began to smoke and talk.

"My word, Mr. Potter," he said with easy familiarity, it is a good thing for you that I knew you," and he *showed his white*, even teeth in a smile. "But I

haven't forgot that when I got speared on the Albert River five years ago you drove me into Burketown in your buggy to get a doctor for me." (He had formerly been one of Potter's stockmen, and had been badly wounded in an encounter with wild blacks.)

Potter made some apparently careless reply. He knew that Sandy, though an excellent stockman, had always had a bad record, and indeed he had been compelled to dismiss him on account of his dangerous temper. He heard later on that the man had joined the Black Police, and a deserter from the Black Police is in nine cases out of ten an unmitigated villain.

Then Sandy became communicative, and frankly told his involuntary host part—but part only—of his story, and wound up by saying—

"You must not sleep here to-night. There is a big mob of myalls camped in the river-bed three miles away from here. If they see you, they'll kill you for certain between now and to-morrow night, when you are going through some of the gorges. You must saddle up again, and I'll take you along another track and leave you safe."

Tired as the horses were, Potter took Sandy's advice, and the two started at sunset, the blackfellow leading. They travelled for some hours, and then again camped —this time without a fire. Sandy remained till daylight, and during a further conversation boasted that he had enough gold in nuggets to allow him to have "a fine time in Sydney or Melbourne," where he meant to make his way some day "when things got a bit quiet and people thought he was dead." In proof of his

assertion about the gold he gave Potter a two ounce nugget he picked out from several others which were carried in one of his ammunition pouches. Before they parted Potter gave him—at his particular request—one of the two blankets he carried, and then Sandy and he shook hands, and the blackfellow, rifle in hand, disappeared, and left his former master to continue his journey.

"What a hawwid chawacter!" said Mr. Assheton, when the clergyman had concluded his story. "Why don't the police exert themselves and catch or shoot the fellow?"

"It is such very difficult country," explained Myra, "and, in fact, has not yet all been explored."

The ladies rose, and Myra and Sheila, pleading fatigue, went to their rooms—or rather to Myra's—leaving Mrs. and Miss Trappème and Mrs. Wooler to, as Sheila said, "Tear me to pieces. But I could not let that woman insult me without retaliating."

"Of course you did right. She's an odious creature."

Grainger returned alone about eleven o'clock. He tapped at Myra's door, and asked her if she was asleep.

"No. Miss Carolan is here; we've been having a lovely talk."

"Well, go to bed, and have a lovely sleep. I want to see you both, especially Miss Carolan, very early in the morning. We can all go out on the beach before breakfast."

"Very well, Ted. Has Mr. Mallard come in?"

"No. He will not be here for another half-hour or more. Good-night."

Mrs. Trappème had heard his voice, and quietly opened the door of her own sitting-room, where she and Juliette (Mrs. Wooler had gone) had been discussing Sheila's delinquencies.

"Well!" gasped the mother to her daughter, as she softly closed the door again. "What on earth *is* going on, I should like to know! Did you hear that—'I want to see you both very early, especially Miss Carolan'? What *is* there going on? I must go and see Mrs. Wooler in the morning and tell her. And on the beach too! Why can't they be more open?"

Master Mordaunt, who was in the corner devouring some jelly and pastry given to him by his fond mother, looked up and said, with distended cheeks—

"Ain't the beach open enough?"

"Hold your tongue, you horrid little animal," said the irate Juliette.

## CHAPTER XI

### A CHANGE OF PLANS

MYRA and Sheila, both early risers, were dressed and awaiting Grainger on the verandah when he came out of his room at seven o'clock, and they at once descended the steep Melton Hill to the beach. The morning was delightfully fresh and cool, and the smooth waters of Cleveland Bay were rippling gently to a fresh southerly breeze. Eastward, and seven miles away, the lofty green hills and darker-hued valleys of Magnetic Island stood clearly out in the bright sunlight, and further to the north Great Palm Island loomed purple-grey against the horizon. Overhead was a sky of clear blue, flecked here and there by a few fleecy clouds, and below, on the landward side, a long, long curve of yellow beach trending from a small rocky and tree-clad point on the south to the full-bosomed and majestic sweep of Cape Halifax to the north.

"What a lovely day!" exclaimed Sheila as Grainger, as soon as they had descended the hill and stepped on the firm yellow sand, led them to a clump of black, shining rocks. "I wish I were a girl of twelve, so *that* I could paddle about in the water."

## A CHANGE OF PLANS

"There is nothing to stop you doing that at Minerva Downs, Miss Carolan," said Grainger with a smile. "There is a lovely fresh-water lagoon there, with a clear sandy bottom, and the Farrow children—big and little—spend a good deal of their time there bathing and fishing." Then, as the girls seated themselves, he at once plunged into the subject uppermost in his mind.

"Myra, the news that came through last night has put me in a bit of a quandary, both as regards you and Miss Carolan. Now tell me, would you mind very much if I left you to-day and returned to Chinkie's Flat?"

"No, indeed, Ted. Surely I would not be so selfish as to interfere with your business arrangements!"

"That's a good little girl. I did want to stay in Townsville for a week or two after you had left, then I could have taken Miss Carolan as far as Chinkie's Flat on her way to Minerva Downs. But I can do something better, as far as she is concerned. You will only be here for a week, and you can suffer the Trappème people for that time. Mallard"—and he smiled—"will no doubt try to make the time pass pleasantly for you."

"Don't be so silly, Ted. Get to the point about Miss Carolan. When is she leaving?"

"To-day—if you will, Miss Carolan—with me. The Warden and his troopers are leaving at noon for the new rush; and Charteris, when I explained things to him (I saw him last night at Mallard's office) said he will be very pleased if we will come with him. Will it be too much of a rush *for you?*"

"Oh no, Mr. Grainger! But I have no horse," and then, as she thought of leaving her newly-found girl friend so soon, she looked a little miserable, and her hand stole into Myra's.

"Oh, that's all right," said Grainger cheerfully. "I've two for you—Myra's, and one Charteris is lending me for you. Can you ride hard and fast? Charteris is a terror of a man for pushing along to a new rush."

"I won't make him feel cross, I assure you, Mr. Grainger."

"Then it's decided." (Sheila well knew that whether she had or had not decided, he had; yet though dimly resentful, she was quite content when she looked into his quiet grey eyes.) "You see, Miss Carolan, it's quite likely I may be able to go all the way with you to Minerva Downs, and therefore we ought not to miss travelling with the Commissioner as far as he goes. Sub-Inspector Lamington, of the Native Police, is also coming with us. He's off on a wild goose—or rather, a wild nigger—chase after Sandy and Daylight and their myall friends. If, when we get to Chinkie's Flat, I find that I *must* go with Charteris to the new rush, your friend Dick Scott and my own trusty black boy Jacky will take you on to Minerva Downs. You can travel with Lamington and his troopers part of the way after you leave Chinkie's. Take some light luggage on a packhorse—the rest, I am sorry to say, will have to come on from here by bullock team. But it is not unlikely that I may be able to take you all the way."

"I am very, very grateful to you, Mr. Grainger," said

Sheila. "I fear I am going to prove a great encumbrance to you."

"Oh, Ted is a dear old brother!" said Myra, patting his brown, sun-tanned hand affectionately.

After a walk along the beach as far as the small, rocky point, they returned to breakfast, and great was Mrs. Trappème's astonishment when Grainger informed her that he was leaving in a few hours.

"Not for long, I trust?" she said graciously, bearing in mind that he had told her he might remain for a week or two after Myra had left.

"I do not think I shall be in Townsville again for some months," he replied, as he handed her fourteen guineas. "This is for the week for my sister and for me."

"Thank you," said the lady, with a dignified bow—for she felt a little resentful at his not telling her more. Then she said with a sweet smile, "We will take good care of Miss Grainger. Either my daughters or I will be delighted to see her safely on board the steamer."

"Thank you; but Mr. Mallard will do that."

"Oh, indeed!" said the lady, with unmistakable disappointment in her voice, and then Grainger, without saying a word about Sheila, went to his room to pack, and talk to Mallard, who had not yet risen.

"I wonder if Mr. Mallard is leaving too now that his friend is going," anxiously said Juliette a few minutes later.

"If he does I shall insist upon having the full six guineas," remarked her mother angrily. "No, on second thoughts I won't *ask* for it. Whether he leaves or not,

I may find him very useful. I quite mean to ask him to every day publish a 'list of guests at "Magnetic Villa."'"

"Miss Carolan wud like to see yez, mum, if ye are dishengaged," said Mary, entering the room.

Sheila was in the drawing-room, and thither Mrs. Trappème sailed.

"I shall be leaving Townsville to-day, I find," she said politely. "Would it be inconvenient for you to have my luggage sent to Hanran & Co., who will store it for me until I need it?"

Mrs. Trappème's curiosity was intense, but she remembered Mrs. Wooler's experience of the previous evening—and feared. And then she had had the girl's money in advance.

"Oh, I am so sorry you are going," she said, with a would-be motherly smile. "Of course I will send it anywhere you wish—but why not leave it here in my care?" And then she could not resist asking one question: "Are you going to Minerva Downs, Miss Carolan, may I ask?"

"Yes; I am going there."

"What a dreadfully long journey for you! Does it not alarm you? And you are surely not travelling alone?"

"Oh, no; I am fortunate in having quite a large escort. Will you send the luggage down as soon as possible, Mrs. Trappème?"

"Certainly," replied the lady—this time with a stiff bow; for she was now inwardly raging at not having learnt more. Then she went off to tell Juliette this new development.

At ten o'clock, after Mallard had breakfasted, he and Grainger (the latter bidding Mrs. and the Misses Trappème a polite goodbye) went away, and shortly after Dick Scott appeared, leading a pack-horse. He took off the empty bags, and marched up to the front door.

"Mr. Grainger has sent these to Miss Caroline, miss," he said to Lilla Trappème, "and will you please ask her to put her things into 'em and I'll wait?"

Myra helped Sheila pack some clothing, rugs, &c., into the bags, and Mary took them out to the burly Dick.

"By jingo! you're the finest woman I've seen here yet," said he affably to the blushing Mary. "Now, will you tell Miss Caroline and Miss Grainger that I'll be up with the horses in half an hour? Goodbye, bright eyes."

He returned within the time, riding his own horse and leading two others.

"Sidesaddles," said Juliette to her mother as they watched through the dining-room windows the big digger dismount and hang the horses' reins over the front gate.

As he strode across the lawn, they heard Mary's voice in the hall. It sounded as if she were half crying.

"Goodbye, miss, and Hivin's blessin' on ye; and may God sind ye a good husband."

A moment or two later she entered, wiping her eyes. "The ladies are goin', and wish to spake to yez," she said.

Mrs. Trappème and her daughters rose, as Myra and Sheila, clad in their neatly-fitting habits, came into the room.

"I am going to accompany Miss Carolan and my brother for a few miles, Mrs. Trappème, so I shall not be here for lunch," said Myra.

"Oh, indeed," said Mrs. Trappème faintly; and then, with a pleasant smile from Myra, and a coldly polite bow from Sheila, they were gone.

Scott swung them up into their saddles, and in another minute they were descending the hill.

Mother and daughter looked at each other.

"So she's going with Mr. Grainger," said Juliette, with an unpleasant twitch of her thin lips; "the—the little *cat!* I'd like to see her fall off!"

"Never mind her—she's gone now—and I have had six guineas from her," remarked her amiable mamma. "Now, if you are coming into Flinders Street with me, make haste, and don't sit grizzling."

Poor Juliette! Poor Mrs. Lee-Trappème! When they descended the hill and emerged out into Flinders Street, they found the side-path crowded with people, who were all gazing into the great yard of the Queen's Hotel, from which was emerging a cavalcade. First came four people—the white-bearded Charteris with Myra, and Grainger with Sheila; after them a sergeant and six white police, and ten Native Police with carbines on thighs, and then Dick Scott and dark-faced Inspector Lamington; behind followed a troop of spare horses.

As they swung through the gates, the crowd cheered as Charteris gave the word, and the whole party went off at a sharp canter down the long, winding street.

## CHAPTER XII

### SHEILA BECOMES ONE OF A VERY "UNREFINED" CIRCLE

THE night wind was soughing mournfully through the dark line of she-oaks fringing the banks of a small, swiftly-running creek, when Sheila was awakened by some one calling to her from outside the little tent in which she was sleeping. She sat up and looked out.

"Did you call me, Mr. Grainger?"

"Yes. There is a storm coming down from the ranges. Sorry to awaken you, but we want to make your tent more secure."

Aided by Scott, whose giant figure Sheila could scarcely discern—so dark was the night—Grainger soon had the tent prepared to resist the storm. As they worked, there came such an appalling thunderclap that it shook the ground beneath her, and for some minutes she was unable to hear even the droning roar of the rain-laden tornado that came tearing down from the mountains, snapping off the branches of the gum-trees, bending low the pliant boles of the moaning she-oaks, and lifting the waters of the creek up in sheets.

A hand touched her face in the Cimmerian darkness,

and Dick Scott's voice (he was shouting with all the strength of his mighty lungs) seemed to whisper—

"Lie down, miss; lie down, and don't be afeerd. The tent will stand, as we are pretty well sheltered here, and——"

Another fearful thunderclap cut short his words, and she instinctively clutched his hand. She was used to terrific thunderstorms in New South Wales, but she had never heard anything so awful as this—it seemed as if the heavens had burst.

"Where is Mr. Grainger?" she asked, putting her lips to Dick's ear and speaking loudly.

"Here, beside me, miss."

"And poor Jacky! Where is he?"

"We'll find out presently, miss. Most likely the horses have cleared out, and he's gone after 'em," shouted Scott.

For another five minutes the howling fury of the wind and the hissing of the rain rendered any further conversation impossible. Then came a sudden lull of both. Grainger struck a match and lit a small lantern he was holding, and Sheila felt a great satisfaction as the light showed upon his face—calm and quiet as ever—as he looked at her and smiled.

"You must pardon us coming into the tent, Miss Carolan, but we wanted to light and leave the lantern with you. I'm afraid the horses have bolted for shelter into the sandalwood scrub lower down the creek, or into the gullies, and Jacky has gone after them. Will you mind staying here alone for an hour or two whilst Scott and I help him to find them?"

"Not at all," she replied bravely, "and I really do not need the light. I am not at all afraid."

"I know that, Miss Carolan. But it will serve to show us the way back." (This was merely a kindly fiction.) "And if, during a lull in the rain, you should hear any of the horses' bells, will you fire two shots from that Winchester rifle there beside you? It is possible that they may be quite near to us. Old Euchre" (one of the pack-horses) "has as much sense as a Christian, and it is quite likely that whilst Scott, Jacky, and I are looking for them in the scrub, he will lead them back here."

Then placing the lantern beside her, and partly shielding it with a saddle cloth to protect it more fully from the gusts of wind, he and Scott went out into the blackness.

She heard Scott a minute or two later give a loud *Coo-ee!* for Jacky, and fancied she heard an answering cry from the blackboy, a long distance away. Then the rain again descended in a torrential downpour, and drowned out all other sounds.

* * * * *

Two weeks had passed since Sheila had left Townsville with Grainger and the hard-riding old Warden and the swarthy-faced Lamington and his savage-eyed, half-civilised troopers. At Chinkie's Flat they had learnt that there were now three hundred white miners at the new rush on Banshee Creek, but that everything was quiet, and that no disputes of any kind had occurred, and all that Charteris would have to do would be to visit the place, and, according to the "Gold-fields Act,"

proclaim Banshee Creek to be a new gold-field. So, after spending a night at Grainger's new house, built on the ridge overlooking the "Ever Victorious" battery, with its clamorous stampers pounding away night and day, the Warden bid Sheila and Grainger goodbye, and rode off with his hardy white police, leaving Lamington and his black, legalised murderers to go their own way in pursuit of Sandy and Daylight, and "disperse" the myalls—if they could find them—such dispersion meaning the shooting of women and children as well as men.

Now, the truth is, that Grainger should have gone on with the Warden to the new rush, where his prospecting party was anxiously awaiting his arrival; but he was deeply in love with Sheila Carolan, and she with him, although she did not know it. But she was mightily pleased when the "Ever Victorious" Grainger told her that he was going to take her all the way to Minerva Downs, as he "wanted to see Farrow about buying a hundred bullocks to send to the new rush at Banshee Creek." (This was perfectly true, but he could very easily have dispatched a letter to Farrow, who would have sent the bullocks to the meat-hungry diggers as a matter of business.)

As she had stood on the verandah of Grainger's house in the early morning, watching Charteris and his troopers depart, and listening to the clang and thud of the five-and-twenty stampers of the new battery of the "Ever Victorious" pounding out the rich golden quartz, handsome, swarthy-faced Sub-Inspector Lamington ascended the steps and bade her good morning.

"So you and Grainger travel with me for another ninety miles or so, Miss Carolan," he said with undisguised pleasure. "Will you be ready soon?"

"In half an hour."

"Ah, that's right. My boys and I are anxious to get to work," and he went on to the horse yard.

Sheila could not help a slight shudder as she heard the soft-voiced, *debonnair* Lamington speak of his "work." She knew what it meant—a score or two of stilled, bullet-riddled figures of men, women, and children lying about in the hot desert sand, or in the dark shades of some mountain scrub.

Charteris had told her Lamington's story. He was the only survivor of an entire family who had been massacred by the blacks of Fraser's Island, and had grown up with but one object in life—to kill every wild black he came across. For this purpose alone he had joined the Native Police, and there were dark tales whispered of what he had done. But the authorities considered him "a good man," and when he and his fierce troopers rode into town and reported that a mob of wild blacks had been "dispersed," no one ventured to ask him any questions, but every one knew what had occurred.

So with Lamington and his silent, grim Danites, Sheila, Grainger, Scott, and Jacky travelled together for nearly a hundred miles, and then the two companies separated —Lamington heading towards that part of the forbidding-looking mountain range where he hoped to find his prey, and Grainger and his party keeping on to the west.

"It's dangerous country, Grainger," the police officer

said as he bade them goodbye. "There are any amount of niggers all around, so you will need to be careful about your fire at night. Shift your camp a good half mile after you have lit your fire and had supper."

Grainger smiled. "I've been through the mill, Lamington. But I don't think we shall have any trouble unless you head them off and send Sandy and his friends down on to us."

"I do mean to head them off, and drive them down from the range into the spinifex country about thirty miles from here, when I can round them up," said Lamington softly, as if he were speaking of driving game. "Sorry you won't be with me to see the fun. The £500 reward for the production of Messieurs Sandy and Daylight—alive or dead—I already consider as mine. It will give me a trip to Melbourne to see the Cup next year."

"But you can't claim the money—you're an official."

"This is an exceptional case, and no distinction is to be made between civilians and policemen—the Government does sensible things *sometimes*."

* * * * *

Two hours passed, and Sheila, anxiously awaiting the sound of the horses' bells, or the reappearance of Grainger and Scott, began to feel that something had gone amiss. The storm had ceased, and when she rose and stepped outside she saw that a few stars were shining. Seating herself upon a granite boulder, she listened intently, but the only sound that broke the black silence of the night was the rushing of the waters of the creek.

She placed her hands to her mouth, and was about to give a loud *Coo-ee!* when her pride stopped her.

"If they hear me," she thought, "they will think I am frightened."

She went back into the tent and again lay down, and tried by the light of the lantern to read a book which Myra Grainger had given her. Her watch had stopped, and when she put the book aside she knew that the dawn was near, for the harsh cackle of a wild pheasant sounded from the branches of a Leichhardt tree near by, and was answered by the shrill, screaming notes of a flock of king-parrots which the storm had driven to settle amidst the thick, dense scrub on the bank of the creek.

Quite suddenly she became aware that something was moving about in the grass outside the tent, and a thrill of alarm made her instinctively clutch the Winchester rifle beside her. Surely there was some one there, whispering! Very quietly she sat up and waited. Yes, there certainly were people outside, and a cold chill of terror possessed her when the whisperings changed to a rapid and louder muttering in an unknown tongue, and she knew that her visitors were blacks!

Unable to even speak, she heard the soft rustle of footsteps drawing nearer and nearer, and then the closed flap of the tent was pulled slowly aside by a long black hand, and the wicked eyes of the bearded face of a huge aboriginal, naked to the waist, gazed into hers. For a second or two he looked at her, watching her terrified expression as a snake watches the fascinated bird; then he drew back his lips and showed two rows of gleaming teeth in a fierce smile of exultation. By a mighty effort

she tried to raise the Winchester, and in another moment the blackfellow sprang at her, covered her head with a filthy kangaroo skin, and silently bore her outside.

For quite ten minutes she felt herself being carried swiftly along, till her captor came to the creek, which he crossed. Then he uncovered her face and spoke to her in English.

"If you make a noise I will kill you, and throw your body in the creek. I am Sandy the Trooper."

She gazed at him mechanically, too horrified at her surroundings to utter a sound. For dawn had just broken, and she saw that she was standing in a small open space in the midst of a sandalwood scrub, and encircled by twenty or thirty ferocious-looking myall blacks, all armed with spears and waddies. The strong ant-like odour which emanated from their jet-black skins filled her nostrils, and, putting her hands to her eyes, she shuddered and fell upon her knees with a choking sob.

"Come, none of that, missie," said another voice in English, and her hands were rudely pulled aside; "you must get up and walk. Perhaps we won't hurt you. But if you make a noise I'll give you a tap on the head with this waddy," and the speaker flourished a short club over her head. "Come! get up!"

She obeyed him, rose slowly to her feet, and in another instant darted aside, and, breaking through the circle of myalls, plunged into the scrub towards the creek. But before she had gone twenty yards one of them had seized her by her loosened hair, and a long pent-up scream burst from her lips.

Again the filthy skin was thrown over her head, then her hands were quickly tied behind her with a strip of bark.

Sandy lifted her up in his arms, and he, Daylight, and their followers plunged into the forest and set off towards the mountains.

## CHAPTER XIII

### ON THE SCENT

THROUGH the blackness of the night and the pouring rain Grainger and Scott made their way down the right bank of the creek to where, a mile or a mile and a half away, was a thick scrub of sandalwood trees, in which they imagined the terrified horses had taken refuge. The rushing, foaming waters guided them on their way, though every now and then they had to make a detour round the heads of some gullies, which were bank high with backwater from the swollen creek. As soon as there was a lull in the storm they again *Coo-eed*, but received no answer from Jacky. Grainger, who had the most implicit faith in the judgment of his blackboy, now began to fear that the horses, instead of making for the scrub, had gone towards the mountains, where it would perhaps be most difficult to get them. However, there was nothing to be done but to first examine the scrub, and then to see what had become of Jacky. Both he and Scott had brought their bridles with them, and the blackboy, they knew, had his as well, and they were hoping that at any moment they might meet him driving the horses back to the camp.

## ON THE SCENT

By the time the scrub was reached the storm had begun to break somewhat, for although rain still fell heavily, the wind was losing its violence; and presently, to their satisfaction, they heard Jacky's voice shouting somewhere near them.

"Where are you?" called out Scott.

"Here, on cattle camp, in middle of scrub. I been catch old Euchre and two more horse, but can't find other pack-horse and bay filly and roan colt. I 'fraid they been go 'way back up mountain."

They found him engaged in tying up the foreleg of Scott's horse with strips of his shirt. The animal, when racing along in the dark, had fallen and cut itself badly from knee to hoof. Grainger examined the injury, and saw that, although the poor creature was very lame, it could easily be led to the camp. But the loss of the remaining horses was a serious matter, and after a brief discussion it was resolved to first make a thorough search along the creek for another mile before giving up any hopes of finding them in the vicinity of the scrub. Then, if no traces could be found, they were to return to the camp for their saddles, and Jacky and Grainger would endeavour to pick up their tracks as soon as daylight broke.

An hour was spent fruitlessly, and they turned back and made for the camp, Scott and Grainger riding bare-backed, and Jacky going ahead on foot, leading the lame horse. Presently they came to a deep, rocky gully, which they crossed, and were carefully ascending the steep bank when Scott's horse tripped over a loose stone and fell heavily, with his rider underneath.

Jacky and Grainger at once went to his assistance and got the horse away, but Scott lay perfectly motionless, and when spoken to did not answer. Grainger, like all good bushmen, had kept his matches dry, and, striking a light, he saw that the big digger had not only received some injury to his head, but, worse still, had broken his leg; the bone had snapped completely across half-way down from the knee.

For quite ten minutes the poor fellow remained unconscious, then, when he came to his senses, his first question was about the horse. Was he hurt?

"No, Dick; but your leg is broken."

The language that flowed from Mr. Scott's bearded lips cannot possibly be set down, but he resigned himself cheerfully to Grainger and Jacky when they put the broken limb into rough splints made of bark and twigs to keep it in position until they could do something better on their arrival at the camp.

Refusing to be carried, Scott dragged himself up the bank, and then allowed them to lift him on Euchre's back, Grainger riding and Jacky walking beside him.

By the time they reached the camp it was broad daylight, and an alarmed look came into Grainger's eyes when there was no response to his loud *Coo-ee!* thrice repeated.

Suddenly Jacky, whose dark eyes were rolling unnaturally as he glanced all around him, let go the horse he was leading, sprang forward, and entered the tent. He reappeared in a moment.

"What is wrong, Jacky? Where is she?"

"Gone," was the quick reply. "Myall blackfellow been here and take her away!"

"Good God!" said Grainger hoarsely, feeling for the moment utterly unnerved as he watched the blackboy walk quickly round and round the tent, examining the grass.

"Plenty blackfellow been here," he said, "but only one fellow been go inside tent. I think it, he catch him up missie when she sleep——"

An oath broke from Scott's lips. "Let me down, boss, let me down! It's all my fault. Quick! put me inside the tent and let me be. You and Jacky has two good horses, and Jacky is the best tracker this side o' the country."

"I'll see to your leg first, Dick," cried Grainger, as he and Jacky lifted him off Euchre and helped him into the tent.

"By jingo, you won't, boss!" was the energetic reply. "What does it matter about my leg? Let me be. I'll pull along all right, even if you are away for a day, or two days, or a week. For God's sake, boss, don't fool about me! Think of *her*. Saddle up, saddle up, and bring her back! They can't be far away. Jacky, I'll give you fifty pounds if you get her. Boss, take plenty o' cartridges an' some tucker. I'll be as right as rain here. But hurry, hurry, boss! If they get her into the mountains we'll never see any more of her but her gnawed bones," and the big man struck his clenched fist passionately upon the ground.

But Grainger, although almost maddened with fear as to Sheila's fate, would not leave the man helpless, and

whilst Jacky was saddling the horses, he put provisions and water, and matches and tobacco, near the poor, excited digger. Then, with the blackboy's aid, he quickly and effectively set the broken leg with proper splints, seized round with broad strips of ti-tree bark.

"There, Dick, that's all I can do for you now."

"You're losing time over me, boss. Hurry, hurry! and get the young lady back for God's sake."

Five minutes later Jacky had picked up the tracks of Sandy and Daylight and their allies, and he and Grainger, with hearts beating high with hope, were following them up swiftly and surely.

## CHAPTER XIV

### "MISS CAROLINE" IS "ALL RIGHT" (VIDE DICK SCOTT)

THE tracks of the abductors of Sheila were easily discernible to the practised eyes of Jacky—than whom a better tracker was not to be found in North Queensland. They led in an almost direct line towards the grim mountain range for about seventeen miles, and then were lost at a rapidly-flowing, rocky-bottomed stream—a tributary of that on which Grainger's camp had been made.

Never for one instant did Grainger think of questioning the judgment of his tried and trusted blackboy, when, as they came to the stream, he jumped off his horse and motioned to his master to do the same.

"Them fellow myall have gone into water, boss, and walk along up," he said placidly, as he took out his pipe, filled and lit it. Then he added that they had better take the saddles off the horses, short-hobble them, and let them feed.

"You don't think, Jacky, that they" (he meant the blacks) "might get on too far ahead of us?" he asked, as he dismounted.

"No, boss, they are camped now, 'bout a mile or two

mile further up creek. We can't take horses there—country too rough, and myall blackfellow can smell horse long way off—all same horse or bullock can smell myall blackfellow long way off."

Grainger knew that this was perfectly true—cattle and horses can always scent wild blacks at a great distance, and at once show their alarm. And that the country was too rough for Jacky and him to go any further with the horses was quite evident. However, he knew that as soon as his companion had taken a few pulls at his pipe he would learn from him what his plans were.

The weapon that the black boy usually carried was a Snider carbine, but he had left that at the camp, and taken the spare Winchester—the one Sheila had dropped in the tent: and he was now carefully throwing back the lever, and ejecting the cartridges, and seeing that it was in good order ere he re-loaded it.

"Your rifle all right, boss?" he asked.

"All right, Jacky; and my revolver too."

Jacky grunted—somewhat contemptuously—at the mention of the revolver. "You won't get chance with rewolber, boss. Rifle best for you an' me this time, I think it. Rewolber right enough when you ride after myall in flat country."

"Very well, Jacky," said Grainger, "I'll leave the revolver behind. What are we going to do?"

"First, short-hobble horses, and let 'em feed—plenty grass 'bout here. Then you follow me. I think it that them fellow myall camp" (rest) "'bout two mile up creek."

"How many are there, Jacky?"

"'Bout twenty, boss—perhaps thirty. And I think it that some feller runaway policeman with them—Sandy or Daylight, I beleeb."

"What makes you think that?" said Grainger, instantly remembering that Lamington had said that he meant to try and head off Sandy and his myalls down into the spinifex country.

"Come here, boss."

Grainger followed him to the margin of the creek, which although at dawn had been running half bank high, owing to the tremendous downpour of rain, was now at its normal level.

"Look at that, boss."

He pointed to a triangular indentation, which, with footmarks, was imprinted in the soft yellow sand at the foot of a small boulder; and taking the butt of his Winchester rifle, fitted it into the impression.

"Some feller with Winchester rifle been sit down here, boss, and light his pipe. See, he been scrape out pipe," and he indicated some partially consumed shreds of tobacco and some ashes which were lying on the sand.

"Ah, I see, Jacky," and a cold chill of horror went through him as he thought of Sheila being in the power of such a fiend as Sandy. The myalls would in all likelihood want to kill and eat her, but Sandy or Daylight would probably wish to keep her a captive. And that Jacky was correct in his surmise there could be but little doubt—both the outlawed ex-policemen had Winchesters, taken from the Chinese packers whom they had murdered.

"Go on, Jacky, my boy, for God's sake!" he said hoarsely, placing his hand on the blackboy's shoulder. "Missie may be killed if we do not hurry."

"No fear, boss!" replied Jacky with cheerful confidence, as he proceeded to strip. "You 'member what I told you 'bout that white woman myall blacks take away with them long time ago when ship was break up near Cape Melville, and they find her lying on beach? They didn't kill her—these myall nigger like White Mary * too much. I don't think these fellow will kill Missie. I think it Daylight or Sandy will want her for *lubra*. † Take off boots, boss."

Grainger pulled off his knee boots, and threw them up on the bank, and then he and Jacky short-hobbled the horses, and let them feed. The blackboy had stripped himself of every article of clothing, except the remnants of his shirt, which he had tied round his loins; over it was strapped his leather belt with its cartridge pouch.

"Come on, boss," and then instead of crossing the creek as Grainger had imagined he would, he led the way along the same side, explaining that the myalls, expecting—but not fearing—pursuit, would do all that they could to make the pursuers believe that they had walked up through the creek for a certain distance, and then crossed over to the opposite side. The gins ‡ and picaninnies, he said, were not with the party that had seized Sheila, neither were there any dogs with them.

"And you will see, boss," he said, as, after they had

* "White Mary" = A white woman. † Wife.
‡ Gins. Synonymous with *lubra*—*i.e.*, a wife.

come a mile and a half, he pointed to a sandbank on the side of the creek, deeply imprinted with footmarks, "we will find them eating fish in their camp. Look there."

Grainger saw that on the sandbank were a number of dead fish which had been swept down the creek from pools higher up. That many more had been left stranded, and then taken away, was very evident by the disturbed state of the sand and the numerous footmarks.

Suddenly a harsh sound of many voices fell upon their ears, and Jacky came to a dead stop.

Motioning to Grainger to lie down and await his return, he slipped quietly away, his lithe, black body gliding like a snake through the dense jungle which clothed the banks of the creek.

A quarter of an hour later he came back, his black eyes rolling with subdued excitement.

"Come on, boss; it is all right. They are camped in an old *boora* * ground, and Sandy and Daylight are going to fight for Missie. I saw Missie."

"Where was she?" said Grainger, whose heart was thumping fiercely as, rifle in hand, he sprang to his feet.

"In the middle of the *boora* ground. She sit up, but all the same as if she sleep—eyes shut."

"Oh, God, to think that I left her!—to look after horses," Grainger said bitterly to himself as he followed Jacky, who little knew how dear Sheila was to the heart of his "boss."

* A place which the Australian aborigines use for their corroborees and certain religious rites.



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Swiftly but cautiously Jacky led the way through the scrub until they came to the margin of the *boora* ground, and then Grainger saw twenty or thirty blacks seated on the ground in a circle, spears and waddies in hand. In the centre was Sheila, crouched on her knees, with her hands covering her eyes. On each side of her was a Winchester rifle, and a belt with an ammunition pouch —her dowry. And standing near by her, attended by their nude seconds, were Daylight and Sandy, who were also armed with spears and waddies. They were both stripped and painted, and ready to slaughter each other.

"Boss," whispered Jacky, "which feller you want to take?"

"I'll take the big man with the beard," said Grainger, as he drew up his Winchester.

"All right, boss! I take the other man—that's Daylight. But don't shoot until they walk across *boora* ground, and turn and face each other. Shoot him through *bingie*,* boss—don't try for head, you might miss him."

"All right, Jacky," and Grainger lay flat on the ground and brought his rifle to his shoulder, "but don't miss your man."

"No fear of that, boss. I'm going to give it to Daylight between the eyes. But let me drop him first."

"Right."

Daylight and Sandy were taken by their seconds to opposite sides of the ring, and then, drawing their heads back and poising their spears, they awaited each other's attack.

* Stomach.

Then Jacky's Winchester cracked, and Daylight spun round and fell dead, and Sandy's spear flew high in air as a bullet took him fair in the chest. And then the savage instinct to slay came upon and overwhelmed Grainger, as well as his black boy, and shot after shot rang out and laid low half a dozen of the sitting and expectant savages ere they could recover from their surprise and flee.

Grainger rushed forward to Sheila and lifted her up.

A hysterical sob burst from her as she put her trembling hands out towards him.

"Oh, I knew you would come! I knew you would come!" and then her eyes closed, and she lay quiet in his arms.

* * * * *

That night, as Sheila, with tear-swollen eyes of gratitude to God for her preservation, lay sleeping in the little tent, Grainger and the ever-faithful Jacky sat smoking their pipes beside the recumbent figure of burly Dick Scott, who, broken-legged as he was, had insisted upon being taken outside and camping with them.

"Boss," he said, as he handed his pipe to Jacky to be filled, "this will be suthin' for Mr. Mallard to put in the *Champion*, eh?"

"Yes, Dick, old son," and Grainger put his hand on the big man's shoulder, with a kindly light shining in his quiet, grey eyes. "I'll write and tell him all about it. And I'll tell him what a real, downright, out-and-out 'white man' you are."

"Git out, boss," and the rough, bearded digger

laughed childishly with pleasure; "if I sees anythin' in the *Champion* about me, blow me but I'm goin' back to Townsville, and I mean to spark that gal at 'Magnet Villa'—she that was a-cryin' when Miss Caroline came away."

"Right you are, Dick. You have promised Jacky fifty pounds if he brought Miss Carolan back—and you will give it to him. But you are one of the 'Ever Victorious' crowd, and don't want money, so I won't say any more except that I'll give Mrs. Dick Scott five hundred sovereigns for a wedding present. What is her present surname, Dick?"

"Don't know, boss. Didn't ask her. But if she isn't snapped up by one of them flash banker fellows, or some other paper-collared swell, I think I'll get her. Mr. Mallard and Miss Myra said they would put in a good word for me, seein' as I hadn't no time to do any courtin' myself."

"Dick, old son, she's yours! If you have got my sister and Mr. Mallard to speak for you, it's all right—that's a dead certainty. How is your leg?"

"Bully, boss—just bully. Say, boss!"

"Yes, Dick."

"D'ye think we'll get them missin' horses?"

"Horses be hanged! Do you think I'm troubling about them just now?"

"Why, certingly you ought to be troublin' about 'em. Isn't the roan colt and the bay filly worth troublin' about? The best blood in the whole bloomin' country is in that bay filly o' Miss Caroline's. And Jimmy Ah San offered you ninety pound for the roan, didn't he?"

Grainger put out his hand, and grasping Scott's long beard, pretended to shake it.

"Just you go to sleep, Dick Scott, and don't waggle your chin and talk about horses or anything else. You are a blessed nuisance, and if you wake Miss Carolan up I'll pound you when you get better!"

Scott grinned, and then he put out his hand.

"Boss, have you fixed it up with her? I thought as how that there was nothin' in the world so sweet in the way of wimmen as Miss Myra; but Miss Caroline runs her a close second."

"I have not asked her yet, Dick."

"You ask her to-morrow, boss. You take my tip, or before you knows where you are some other fellow will be jumpin' your claim and gettin' her."

"I'll think of it, Dick."

"Don't think too long over it, boss. If it wos me, I'd see it through the first thing to-morrow mornin'."

"You mind your own business, Mister Richard Scott," said Grainger, with a laugh.

"All right, boss; but what about them horses? That bay filly——"

"Go to sleep, you silly old ass."

* * * * *

At dawn Lamington and his Danites came splashing through the creek, and Grainger was aroused by a loud "Hallo!" as the swarthy-faced Inspector cantered up to the tent and dismounted.

"Well, here you are, Grainger. I know all that has happened. I rounded up the myalls outside the *boora* ground, only half an hour after you had left, and one

of the bucks—whom I dropped with a bullet through his thigh—told me what had occurred, when Sandy and Daylight were just about to fight. How is Miss Carolan?"

"Well. She is sleeping. Take a peg," and he handed Lamington his brandy flask.

The officer poured out a stiff nip, drank it off, and then pointed to one of his troopers, who had just dismounted, and was holding in his hand a heavy bundle, wrapped up in an ensanguined saddle-cloth.

"That's my £500, Grainger. I'll have to send those heads to Townsville for identification before I can claim the reward. Awfully smart of you to pot both of them."

"Lamington, you're a *beast*. Tell that nigger of yours to take that infernal bundle away and keep it out of sight, or, by heavens, you and I will quarrel."

Lamington, gentleman at heart, apologised: "I *am* a beast, Grainger. I didn't think of Miss Carolan."

* * * * *

When Sheila awakened she had to bid Dick Scott goodbye, for Lamington was taking him back to Chinkie's Flat.

"Goodbye, Miss Caroline. You an' the boss will pull along all right to Minerva Downs. And when I sees you again, I hope that——"

"Dry up, Dick," said Grainger, with assumed severity.

"Oh, I know it's all right, boss; isn't it, Miss Caroline?"

"Yes, Mr. Scott," said Sheila with a smile, as she

put her little hand into his. "I don't think I shall stay very long at Minerva Downs, and I do think you will soon see me again."

"At Chinkie's Flat?"

"Yes, at Chinkie's Flat," said Grainger, as he put his arm round Sheila, and drew her to him. "Mr. Lamington is sending up a parson from the Bay to Minerva Downs."

"Boss," cried Scott, exultantly, "there's goin' to be a red, rosy, high old time by and by at Chinkie's Flat."

THE END

# *JOHN FREWEN, SOUTH SEA WHALER*

## BOOK I

### CHAPTER I

CAPTAIN ETHAN KELLER, of the *Casilda* of Nantucket, was in a very bad temper, for in four days he had lost two of the five boats the barque carried —one had been hopelessly stove by the dreaded "under-clip" given her by a crafty old bull sperm-whale, and the other, which was in charge of the second mate, had not been seen for seventy hours. When last sighted she was fast to the same bull which had destroyed the first mate's boat; it was then nearly dark, and the whale, which was of an enormous size, although he had three irons in his body and was towing the whole length of line from the stove-in boat as well as that of the second mate, was racing through the water as fresh as when he had first been struck, three hours previously. Then the sun dipped below the sea-rim, and the blue Pacific was shrouded in darkness.

## JOHN FREWEN

"Why in thunder couldn't the dunderhead put a bomb into that fish before it came on dark?" growled the skipper to his other officers, as they sat down to a hurried supper in the spacious, old-fashioned cabin of the whaler.

No one answered. Frewen, the missing officer, was as good a whaleman as ever drove an iron or gripped the haft of a steer-oar, and his half-caste boatsteerer Randall Cheyne was the best on the ship. But there was bad blood between young Frewen and his captain, and Cheyne was the cause of it.

"If they cut and lose that whale," resumed Keller presently, "I'll haze the life out of them—by thunder, I will, if I break my back in doing it! Why, that is the biggest fish we've struck yet. If I had been in that boat, I'd have had that whale in his flurry two hours ago. Why, it appears to me that Frewen got too scared to even try to haul up and give him a bomb, let alone giving him the lance—which was easy enough."

Just as he spoke, one of the boatsteerers entered the cabin and reported that some of the hands thought that they had heard the second mate's bomb gun.

"All right," growled Keller, "tell the cooper to burn a flare."

"I guess Frewen won't lose him," said Lopez, the first mate. "He told me long ago that he never yet had to cut, and I don't think he'll do it now—unless something has gone wrong. That must have been his gun."

"Huh!" sneered Keller, as he viciously speared a piece of salt pork with his fork, "we'll see all about

that when daylight comes. You'll find Mr. Frewen and that yaller-hided Samoa buck back here for breakfast, but no whale."

None of the men made any reply. They knew that Frewen would be the last man to lose a fish through any fault of his own, and only after carefully "drogueing" his line would he part company with it, and that only if the immense creature emptied the line tubs and "sounded." Then, to save the lives of those in the boat, he would have to cut.

"Guess we'll see that whale to-morrow, anyway, whether Mr. Frewen is fast to him or not," said the third mate to the cooper, as they met on deck; "he's got a mighty lot of line hanging to him, and, just after the second mate got fast I saw him shaking his flukes and trying to kick out one of the two irons the mate hove into him."

"Well, that is so; I hope we shall get him. The old man is pretty cranky over it. He hasn't a nice temper even when he's in a good humour, and there will be blue fire blazing if Mr. Frewen does lose the fish after all."

For four hours the barque made short tacks to the eastward, in which direction the boat had been taken by the whale. The night was fine but dark, the sea very smooth, and the flares which were burnt at intervals on board the barque would render her visible many miles away, and a keen look-out was kept for the boat, but nothing could be discovered of it.

Towards midnight the light air from the eastward died away, and was succeeded by a series of rather sharp rain

squalls from the south-west, and Keller, fearing to miss the boat by running past her, hove-to till daylight.

The dawn broke brightly, with a dead calm. Forty pairs of eyes eagerly scanned the surface of the ocean, and in a few minutes there came a cheering cry from aloft.

"Dead whale, oh! Close to on the weather beam."

"Can you see the boat?" cried Lopez.

"No, sir," was the reply after a few seconds silence. "Can't see her anywhere."

"Look on the other side of the whale, you bat!" growled the skipper.

"She's not there, sir," was the reply.

"Lower away your boats, Mr. Rock and Mr. Lopez," said Keller in more gracious tones to the third and first officers; "the second mate can't be far away, but why in thunder he didn't hang on to the whale last night I don't know. Take something to eat with you. You will have to tow that whale alongside—this calm is going to last all day."

Five minutes later the two boats pushed off, and then, as they sped over the glassy surface of the ocean and the huge carcase of the whale was more clearly revealed, Rock called out to his superior officer that he could see a whift * on it.

Lopez nodded, but said nothing.

They pulled up alongside, and the mate's boatsteerer stepped out on to the body of Leviathan and pulled out the whift pole, which was firmly embedded in the blubber.

* A wooden pole with a small pennon; used by whalers' boats as a signal to the ship.

"There's a letter tied round the pole, sir," he said to his officer, as he got back to the boat again and passed the whift aft.

The "letter" had been carefully wrapped in a strip of oilskin, and then tied around the whift pole by a piece of sail twine. It was a sheet of soiled paper with a few pencilled lines written on it. Lopez read it:—

"For the information of Ethan Keller, Hazer: This whale was struck, for the sake of his shipmates' lays, by Randall Cheyne, the 'yaller-hided Samoan,' who has struck more whales than old Hazer Keller ever saw. If Hazer Keller wants us he will find us at Savage Island, where we shall be ready for him.

(Signed) "R. Cheyne, Boatsteerer,
"*Castilda.*"

"Where is Mr. Frewen, sir?" inquired the boatsteerer anxiously.

"Gone for a picnic," replied the mate laconically. "Now, look lively, my lads. We've got to tow this fish to the ship and 'cut in' before the sharks save us the trouble."

## CHAPTER II

THE quarrel between Keller, a rough, blasphemous-mouthed, and violent-tempered man, and his second officer had arisen over a very simple matter.

Frewen, one of the six sons of a struggling New Hampshire farmer, had received a better education than his brothers, for he was intended for the navy. But at sixteen years of age he realised the condition of the family finances, and shipped on a whaler sailing out of New London. From "'foremast hand with hay-seed in his hair," he became boatsteerer; then followed rapid promotion from fourth to second officer's berth, and at the age of five-and-twenty he was as competent a navigator and as good a seaman and boatheader as ever trod a whaleship's deck. For like many a country-bred boy he had the sea instinct in his bones, inherited perhaps from his progenitors, who were of a seafaring stock in old Devonshire, in that town made for ever famous by Kingsley in "Westward Ho!"

When Frewen joined the *Casilda*, Keller had taken a great fancy to the young man, whom he soon discovered was a very able officer, and who proved his ability as a good whaleman so amply during the first

twelve months of the cruise by never losing a whale once he got fast, that Keller, who was as mean as he was brutal to his crew, relaxed his "hazing" propensities considerably. The *Casilda* was always known as a "hard" ship and Keller as a "hazer"; but, on the other hand, she was also a lucky ship, and Lopez, the chief mate, who had sailed in her for many years, was a sterling good man, though a strict disciplinarian, and did much for the men to compensate them for Keller's outbursts of savage fury when anything went wrong. So Lopez, Frewen, and his fellow-officers "worked" together, and the crew "worked" with them, and the *Casilda* became a fairly happy ship, as well as a lucky one, for Keller, after long years, began to realise that it was bad policy to ill-treat a willing crew who would give him a "full" ship in another six months instead of deserting one by one or in batches at every island touched at in the South Seas.

And Frewen was a mascotte, and his half-caste boat-steerer was another, for whenever a pod of whales were sighted the second mate's boat was invariably the first to get fast, and on one glorious day off Sunday Island Frewen's boat killed three sperms—a bull and two cows—and the four other boats each got one or two, so that for over a week, in a calm sea, and under a cloudless sky of blue by day and night, "cutting in" and "trying-out" went on merrily, and the cooper and his mates toiled like Trojans, setting-up fresh barrels; and the smoke and glare of the try-works from the deck of the *Casilda* lit up the placid ocean for many a mile, whilst hordes of blue sharks rived and tore and ripped

off the rich blubber from the whales lying alongside waiting to be cut-in, and Keller shot or lanced them by the score as he stood on the cutting-in stage or in one of the boats made fast to the chains on the free side.

Fourteen months out, as the *Casilda* was cruising northward, intending to touch at one of the Navigator's Islands (Samoa) to refresh, the first trouble occurred. Cheyne, Frewen's boatsteerer, who was a splendidly built, handsome young fellow of twenty-four years of age, received a rather severe injury to his right foot whilst a heavy baulk of timber was being "fleeted" along the deck. Frewen, who was much attached to him, dressed his foot as well as the rough appliances on board would allow, and then reported him to the captain as unfit for duty.

Keller growled something about all "darned half-breeds" being glad of any excuse to shirk duty.

Frewen took him up sharply: "This man is no shirker, sir. He is as good a man as ever 'stood up' to strike a whale. Did you ever see a better one?"

Keller looked at his second officer with fourteen months' repressed brutality glowering in his savage eyes.

"I'm the captain of this ship. Just you mind that. I reckon I can't be taught much by any college buster."

Frewen's hands clenched, but he replied quietly, though he was inwardly raging at Keller's contemptuous manner—

"Just so. You are the captain of this ship, and I know my duty, sir. But I am not the man to be

insulted by any one. And I say that my boatsteerer is not fit for duty."

Keller's retort was of so insulting a character that in another moment the two men—to the intense delight of the crew—were fighting on the after-deck. Lopez and the cooper, as in duty bound, sprang forward and seized their fellow-officer, but the captain, with an oath, bade them stand aside.

"I'll pound you first," he cried hoarsely to Frewen, "then I'll kick you into the foc'sle."

The fight lasted for fifteen minutes, and then Lopez and the third mate forced themselves between and separated them. Both men were terribly punished.

"That will do, sir; that will do, Frewen," said the mate; "do you want to kill each other?"

Keller had some good points about him and a certain amount of humour as well.

"Haow much air yew hurt, Frewen?" he inquired. "I can't exactly see" (both his eyes were fast closing).

"Pretty much like yourself," replied the officer; then he paused and held out his hand. "Shake hands, sir. I'm sorry we've had this turn."

"Wa'al, it's mighty poor business, that's a fact," and Keller took the proffered hand, and then the matter apparently ended.

Early in the morning on the following day whales were raised. There was a stiff breeze and a choppy sea. Three boats, of which Frewen's was one, were lowered. Cheyne, although suffering great pain, insisted on taking his place, and twenty minutes later his officer called out to him to "stand up," for they

were close to the whale—a large cow, which was moving along very slowly, apparently unconscious of the boat's presence.

Then for the first time during the voyage the half-caste missed striking his fish. Unable to sustain himself steadily, owing to his injured foot and the rough sea, he darted his iron a second or two too late. It fell flat on the back of the monstrous creature, which at once sounded in alarm, and next reappeared a mile to windward. For an hour Frewen kept up the chase, and then the ship signalled for all the boats to return, for the wind and sea were increasing, and it was useless for them to attempt to overtake the whales, which were now miles to windward. Neither of the other boats had even come within striking distance of a fish, and consequently Keller was in a vile temper when they returned, and the moment he caught sight of the half-caste boatsteerer he assailed him with a volley of abuse.

The young man listened with sullen resentment dulling his dark face, then as he turned to limp for'ard the captain bade him make haste and get better, and not "try on any soldiering."

He turned in an instant, his passion completely over-mastering him: "I'm no 'soldier,' and as good a man as you, you mean old Cape Cod water-rat. I'll never lift another iron or steer a boat for you as long as I am on this ship."

Five minutes later he was in irons with a promise of being kept on biscuit and water till he "took back all he had said" in the presence of the ship's company.

"I'll lie here and rot first, sir," he said to Lopez; "my father was an Englishman, and I consider myself as good a boatsteerer and as good a man as any one on board. But I do not mean any disrespect to you, sir."

Lopez was sorry for the man, but could not say so. "Keep a still tongue between your teeth," he said roughly, "and I'll talk the old man round by to-morrow."

"Do as you please, sir. But I won't lift an iron again as long as I am in this ship," he replied quietly.

He kept his word. On the following morning he was liberated, and in a week's time he had recovered the use of his foot. Then, when the barque was off the Tonga Islands, a large "pod" of whales were sighted. It was a clear, warm day. The sea was as smooth as a lake, and only the faintest air was ruffling the surface of the water. Three miles away were two small, low-lying islands, clad with coco-palms, their white belting of beach glistening like iridescent pearl-shell under the glowing tropic sun.

As the boats were lowered he said to Frewen, "You know what I have said, sir. I won't lift a harpoon again on this cruise; so don't ask me."

Frewen did not believe him. "Don't be a fool, Randall. We'll show the old man something to-day."

"*I* will, sir, if it costs me my life."

Five minutes later he was in his old place on the for'ard thwart, pulling stolidly, but looking intently at Frewen, whom he loved with a dog-like affection.

Frewen singled out a large bull whale which was lying quite apart from the rest of the "pod" sunning

himself, and sometimes rolling lazily from side to side, oblivious of danger. In another five minutes the boat would have been within striking distance.

"Stand up, Randall," he said.

The half-caste peaked and socketed his oar, and looked at the officer.

"I refuse, sir," he said quietly.

"Then come aft here," cried Frewen quickly, with hot anger in his tones.

"No, sir, I will not. I said I would neither lift iron nor steer a boat again," was the dogged reply.

There was no time to lose. Giving the steer oar to the man pulling the "after-tub oar," the officer sprang forward and picked up the harpoon just in time, Randall jumping aft smartly enough, and taking the tub man's oar. Ten seconds later Frewen had buried his harpoon up to the socket in the whale, and the line was humming as the boat tore through the water. Then, still keeping his place, he let the whole of one tub of line run out, and then hauled up on it and lanced and killed his fish quietly. Cheyne apparently took no notice, though his heart sank within him when Frewen came aft again, and looked at him with mingled anger and reproach.

Some one of the boat's crew talked of what had occurred, though Frewen said nothing; and that night Cheyne was placed in irons by Keller's orders. At the end of a week he was still manacled and almost starving, but he steadfastly refused to do boatsteerer's duty. Then the captain no longer placed any check on himself, and he swore that he would either make the half-caste

yield or else kill him. And he did his best to keep his word.

Nearly a month passed, and then, at Frewen's suggestion, all the officers waited on the captain and begged him to release the unfortunate man; otherwise there was every prospect of the crew mutinying.

"Is he willing to turn to again?" he asked.

"Not as boatsteerer," replied Frewen.

"Then he shall stay where he is," was the savage retort.

Five or six days later Frewen went to Cheyne, who was now confined in the 'tween decks, and implored him to give in.

"Very well, sir. To please you I will give in. But I mean to desert the first chance."

"So do I. I am sick of this condition of things. There are three other men besides yourself in irons now."

"Who are they, sir?"

"Willis, Hunt, and Freeman." (The two latter belonged to his own boat, and had been ironed because they had refused to eat some bad beef. Frewen himself had told Keller that it was uneatable, and again angry words passed between them.)

Cheyne was released and resumed his old place in Frewen's boat, and the officer then sounded the rest of his men, and found they were eager to leave the ship. So he made his plans, and he and Cheyne quietly got together a small supply of provisions and a second breaker of water.

They waited till the ship was well among the Friendly

Group, and Upolu Island was three hundred miles to the north, and then were given the needed opportunity —when the mate's boat was destroyed by the big bull whale, which was then struck by Cheyne.

"Boys," shouted Frewen to his crew, as the boat tore through the water, "I'm not going to kill this whale awhile. He'll give us a long run, and is taking us dead to windward, away from the ship. But before it gets dark I'll give him a bomb."

He successfully carried out his intention. Just as darkness was coming on he hauled up on his line and fired a bomb into the mighty creature; it killed it in a few seconds. Then they lay alongside of the floating carcase, spelled half an hour, had something to eat, and then Cheyne, who had a sense of humour, wrote the scrawl to Keller and tied it round the whift pole.

"Now, lads," cried Frewen, "up sail! It is a fine dark night, and we should be forty or fifty miles away by daylight."

And so, whilst the *Casilda* burnt flare after flare throughout the night, the adventurers were slipping through the water merrily enough, oblivious of the cold rain squalls which overtook them at midnight, as they headed for Samoa.

## CHAPTER III

WHEN Frewen allowed Cheyne to write the pencilled note to Captain Keller, he did so with a double purpose, for he and Cheyne had carefully thought out and decided upon their plans. In the first place, the dead whale would convince the ship's company that he and his boat's crew had "done the square thing," by killing and leaving for their benefit the best and largest whale that had yet been taken, and that although they were deserting (and consequently losing their entire share of the profits of the cruise so far, which would be divided with their former shipmates) the rich prize they were leaving to the ship would prove of ten times the value of the boat in which they had escaped. In the second place he wished to put Keller on a false scent by naming Savage Island (or Niué, as it is generally known) as their destination; for Keller knew that the island was a favourite resort of runaway sailors, but that a suitable reward offered to the avaricious natives would be sure to effect the capture and return to the ship of any deserters from the *Casilda*.

Cheyne's father was an English master mariner, who, tired of a seafaring life, had settled as a trader in the beautiful island of Manono in Samoa. He there married

a daughter of one of the leading chiefs, and himself attained to some considerable influence and property, but lost his life in an encounter with a rebellious clan on the island of Upolu. He left two children: Randall, a lad of sixteen, and Marie, a girl two years younger. The boy went to sea in a whaler, and at the age of twenty-four had an established reputation as one of the smartest boatsteerers in the Pacific. Only once after four years' absence, had he returned to his native country, when he found that his sister, who had just arrived from Australia, where she had been educated, was about to be married to one of the few Europeans in the country—a well-to-do planter and merchant, named Raymond, and that his mother had also married again, and settled in New Zealand.

Satisfied as to his sister's future happiness, he saw her married, and again turned his face to the sea, although Raymond earnestly besought him to stay with and help him in his business. He made his way to Honolulu, and there joined the *Casilda*, then homeward bound, and, as has been related, he and the second officer soon became firm friends.

At the south-east point of the island of Upolu, there is a town named Lepā, and for this place the boat was now steering. The principal chief of the district was a blood relation of Cheyne's mother, and he (Cheyne) knew that every hospitality would be given to himself and Frewen for as long a time as they chose to remain at Lepā.

"After we have seen Mana'lio" (the chief) "we shall consider what we shall do," said the boatsteerer

to Frewen. "I expect he will not like letting us leave him, but will be satisfied when he knows that you and I want to go to my sister's place. These big Samoan chiefs are very touchy in some things."

On the afternoon of the third day out, the land was sighted, and just as the evening fires were beginning to gleam from the houses embowered in the palm-groves of Lepā, the boat grounded on the white hard beach, and in a few minutes the village was in a pleasurable uproar, as the white men were almost carried up to the chief's house by the excited natives, who at once recognised the stalwart Cheyne.

Mana'lio made his relative and Frewen most welcome, and treated them as very honoured guests, whilst the rest of the boat's crew were taken possession of by the sub-chiefs and the people of the town generally, carried off to the *fale taupule* or "town hall," and invited to a hurriedly prepared but ample repast.

On the following morning, Frewen called the whole of his boat's crew together, and told them it would be best for them to separate. "Each of you four men say you don't want to go to sea again—not for a long time at any rate. Well, Mana'lio, the chief here, wants a white man to live with him. He will treat him well, and give him a house and land. Will you stay, Hunt?"

"Yes, sir," was the instant reply.

"Right. And you, Freeman, Chase, and Craik, can stay here in Lepā, and decide for yourselves which towns you will live in. In less than forty-eight hours half the chiefs on the island will be coming to Mana'lio for a white man. Cheyne here will give you some good

advice—if you want the natives to respect you, and to get along and make money and a honest living, follow his advice."

"Ay, ay, sir," assented the men.

"Now, here is another matter. Cheyne and I wish to be mates, and we want the boat."

"Well, I guess *we* have no claim on her, sir," said Hunt, turning to the others for confirmation of his remark.

"Oh, yes you have—she is as much yours as she is mine. Anyway we all have a good right to her, as we have given the ship a whale worth a dozen new boats; and, besides that, by deserting we have forfeited our 'lays' and have put money into Captain Keller's pocket as well as into those of the crew. Now, I have a little money with me—two hundred dollars. Will you four men take a hundred and divide it, and let Cheyne and me have the boat?"

"Ay, ay, to be sure," they cried out in unison.

That evening Frewen and Cheyne bade Mana'lio and the seamen goodbye, and accompanied by four stalwart and well-armed natives, stepped into the boat, hoisted her blue jean main-sail and jib, and amidst a chorus of farewells from the friendly people set out on a forty miles trip along the coast, their destination being the town of Samatau, at the extreme north-west of the island.

For here, so Mana'lio had told them, Mrs. Raymond and her husband were living, the latter having purchased a large tract of land there which he was preparing for a cotton plantation.

## CHAPTER IV

THE boat sailed gently along the outer or barrier reef which fringed the coast of beautiful verdured Upolu, and then, as the sun sank, there shone out myriad stars upon the bosom of a softly heaving sea, and only the never-ceasing murmur of the surf as it beat against the coral barrier, or the cry of some wandering sea-bird, disturbed the warm silence of the tropic night.

Leaving the boat to the care of their native friends at eight o'clock, Frewen and his comrade laid down amidships and were soon fast asleep, for the day had been a tiring one, and they needed more rest to recover from the effects of the three days they had spent on the open sea.

Soon after daylight they were awakened by the steersman, who pointed out a large, lofty-sparred vessel. She was about five miles away, and being head on, Frewen was uncertain as to her rig, till an hour later, when he saw that she was a full-rigged ship.

"Not the *Casilda*," he said to his comrade, and neither of them gave the strange vessel any further thought, especially as the wind had now died away, and, the sail being lowered, the crew bent to the oars under an already hot and blazing sun.

Shortly before noon, the boat rounded a low headland and entered a lovely little bay, embowered in thick groves of coco-palms and breadfruit trees. The new house which Raymond had built was not visible from the bay, but there were some thirty or forty native houses clustered under the shade of the trees, a few yards up from the beach, on which they noticed a ship's longboat was lying.

The moment Frewen's boat was seen, a strange clamour arose, and a number of natives, armed with muskets and long knives, rushed out of their houses, and took cover behind the rocks and trees, evidently with the intention of resisting his landing, and Frewen and Cheyne heard loud cries of "*Lēmonte! Lēmonte!*"

"Back water!" cried Cheyne in his mother tongue to the crew; then he turned to Frewen: "There is something wrong on shore. 'Lēmonte' is my brother-in-law's name, and they are calling for him." Then he stood up and shouted out—

"Friends, do you not know me? I am Randall. Where is my sister and her husband?"

A loud cry of astonishment burst from the natives, many of whom, throwing down their arms, sprang into the water, and clambering into the boat greeted the young man most affectionately; and then one of them, commanding silence, began talking rapidly to him.

"We must get ashore quickly," said Cheyne to Randall. "My brother-in-law has a number of dead and dying people in his house. There has been a mutiny on board that ship—but come on, he'll tell us all about it."

In another minute the boat was on the beach, and as Frewen and Cheyne jumped out they were met by a handsome, dark-faced man about forty years of age, who grasped Cheyne's hands warmly.

"I never expected to see you, Randall," he said quietly, "but I thank God that you *have* come, and at such a time, too. Where is your ship?"

"Three hundred miles away. But we will tell you our story another time. How is Marie?"

"Well. She already hears the people shouting your name. Come to the house." Then he turned to Frewen and held out his hand. "My name is Raymond, and you are welcome to Samatau."

"And mine is Frewen. I hope you will accept any assistance I can give."

"Gladly. But I will tell you the whole story presently. I have two men dying in my house, three others wounded, and two dead."

He led the way along a shady, winding path to the house, on the wide verandah of which were seated a number of natives of both sexes, who made way for them to pass with low murmurs of "*Talofa, aliia,*" * to the two strangers. Then in another moment Marie Raymond stepped softly out from the sitting-room, and threw her arms round her brother's neck.

"Thank God you are here, Randall," she said, leading the way into another room. "Tom will tell you of what has happened. I will return as soon as I can."

"How is Captain Marston?" asked Raymond, as

* "Greeting, gentlemen."

she stood for a moment with her hand on the handle of the door.

"Still unconscious. Mrs. Marston is with him." She paused, and then turned her dark and beautiful tear-dimmed eyes to Frewen: "Tom, perhaps this gentleman might be able to do something. Will he come in and see?"

Raymond drew him aside. "Go in and see the poor fellow. He can't last long—his skull is fractured."

Frewen followed Mrs. Raymond into the large room, and saw lying on her own bed the figure of a man whose features were of the pallor of death. His head was bound up, and kneeling by his side, with her eyes bent upon his closed lids, was a woman, or rather a girl of twenty-two or twenty-three years of age. As, at the sound of footsteps, she raised her pale, agonised face, something like a gleam of hope came into it.

"Are you a doctor?" she asked in a trembling whisper.

The seaman shook his head respectfully. "No, madam; I would I were."

He leant over the bed, and looked at the still, quiet face of the man, whom he could see was in the prime of life, and whose regular, clear-cut features showed both refinement and strength of character.

"He still breathes," whispered the poor wife.

"Yes, so I see," said Frewen, as he rose. Then he asked Mrs. Raymond a few questions as to the nature of the wound, and learned that in addition to a fractured skull a pistol bullet had entered at the back of the neck.

"There is no hope, you think. I can see that by your face," said Mrs. Marston, suppressing a sob.

"I cannot tell, madam. But I do think that his condition is very, very serious."

She bent her head, and then sank on her knees again beside the bed, but suddenly she rose again, and placed her hand on Frewen's sleeve.

"I know that my husband must die, no human aid can save him. But will you, sir, go and see poor Mr. Villari. Mr. Raymond has hopes for him at least. And he fought very bravely for my husband."

Villari was the first mate of the ship, and was lying in another room, together with three wounded seamen. He was a small, wiry Italian, and when Frewen entered with Raymond and Mrs. Raymond, he waved his right hand politely to them, and a smile lit up his swarthy features. He had two bullet wounds, one a clean hole through the right shoulder, the other in the thigh. He had lost a great deal of blood, but none of his high courage, though Raymond at first thought he could not live.

"I am not going to die," he said. "*Per Bacco*, no."

Frewen spoke encouragingly to him and then turned his attention to the seamen, all of whom were Englishmen. None of them were severely wounded, and all that could be done for them had been done by Raymond and their own unwounded shipmates, of whom there were four.

"Now I shall tell you the story," said Raymond to Frewen and Cheyne, as he led the way to the verandah, on which a table with refreshments had been placed. "But, first of all, do you see that ship out there? Well,

that is the *Esmeralda.* She is now in the possession of the mutineers, and has on board forty-five thousand dollars. You see that she is becalmed ?"

"And likely to continue so for another three or four days, if I am any judge of the weather in this part of the Pacific," said Frewen.

"I agree with you. And now, before I begin to tell you the story of the mutiny, I want to know if you two will help me to recapture her ? You are seamen, and——"

Both men sprang to their feet.

"Yes, we will !"

"Ah ! I thought you would not refuse. Now wait a moment," and calling to a young native who was near, he bade him go to the chief of Samatau and ask him to come to the house as quickly as possible.

"Maliē, the chief of Samatau, will help us," he said to Frewen; "he has two hundred of the best fighting men in Samoa, and I shall ask him to pick out fifty. But we want a nautical leader—some one to take charge of the ship after we get possession of her."

"Now here is the story of the mutiny, told to me by poor Mrs. Marston."

## CHAPTER V

"AT daylight this morning, my wife and I were aroused by our servants, who excitedly cried to us to come outside. A boat, they said, was on the beach with a number of white men in it, some of whom were dead.

"I went down to the beach at once, and five minutes later had all the unfortunate wounded and unwounded people assisted to the house, for they were completely exhausted by what they had undergone, and were also suffering from thirst. Two of their number had succumbed to their wounds in the boat a few hours previously, so Villari, the mate, told me. Marston, who had been shot in the neck, was unconscious, and his wife who, as you saw, is little more than a girl, was herself wounded in the arm by a musket ball.

"We did all that we could do, and after Mrs. Marston had had an hour's rest, she and Villari told me their story.

"The *Esmeralda* is Marston's own ship, and left Valdivia, in Chile, for Manila about seven weeks ago. She is almost a new ship, only having been built at Aberdeen last year. Marston, who had just married, brought out a general cargo from London to Valdivia and

other South American ports, and sold it at a very handsome profit. Whilst on the coast, fever broke out on board, and he lost his second mate and five A.B.'s, and the third mate and two others had to go into hospital. In their places he shipped a new second mate—a man named Juan Almanza—and twelve seamen, ten of whom were either Chilenos or Peruvians, and the remaining two Greeks. The former boatswain he promoted to the third mate's birth. Almanza proved to be a good officer, and the new men gave him satisfaction, though his agent at Valdivia had urged him not to take the two Greeks, who, he said, were likely to prove troublesome. Unfortunately he did not take the agent's advice, and said that he had often had Greeks with him on previous voyages, and found them very fair sailormen—much better than Chilenos or Mexicans.

"He had been paid for his cargo mostly in silver dollars, and the money was brought on board in as quiet a manner as possible, and he believed without the new hands knowing anything about it. Poor fellow; he was fatally mistaken! In all it amounted to thirty-five thousand dollars, and in addition to this there was a further sum of two thousand pounds in English gold on board—Marston, I must tell you, is, I imagine, a fairly wealthy man, for his wife told me that he had the *Esmeralda* built at a cost of six thousand pounds.

"He had been informed at Valdivia that a cargo of Chile flour, which could be bought very cheaply at Valparaiso, could be sold at a huge profit in Manila, and he thereupon bought a full cargo—six hundred tons—and sailed, as I have said, about seven weeks ago. All went

well on board from the very first, although the English seamen did not much care about their foreign shipmates, who, however, did their duty after a fashion. Almanza, Mrs. Marston says, was in all respects an able and smart officer, and both she and her husband took a great liking to him—the scoundrel!

"The two Greeks—who, by the way, called themselves and shipped under the English names of John Foster and James Ryan — the Levantine breed do that trick very often—were in Almanza's watch, as were six of the Chilenos; and the mate one night, coming on deck when it was his watch below, was surprised to find Almanza and the two Greeks engaged in an earnest conversation. His suspicions were aroused, and he reported the matter to the captain, who, however, made light of it, and said that Almanza had told him that Foster and Ryan had been shipmates with him on a Sydney barque some years before, and that it was only natural that Almanza would relax discipline a little, and condescend to chat for a few minutes with men who had sailed with him previously.

"Ryan, the older of the two, had proved himself an excellent seaman, and both Marston and Villari felt sure, from the way in which he spoke to the other seamen, that he had at one time been an officer. In addition to Spanish he speaks both English and French remarkably well, and his manners and personal appearance are extremely good, and no one would take him to be a Greek. He, however, frankly admitted that his name was not Ryan and that he was a native of the island of Naxos in the Ægean Sea.

"At this time, Mr. Frewen, the *Esmeralda* was near these islands—in fact, Upolu was in sight; and Marston, knowing that there were some Europeans settled at the port of Apia, on the north side of the island, decided to put in there for fresh provisions, of which the ship was in need.

"Perhaps his decision made the scoundrelly Almanza imagine that he suspected him, and was only touching at Apia to rid himself of his second officer and his Greek and Chileno accomplices, for Mrs. Marston — who shudders when she mentions Almanza's name—says that shortly after the ship's course was altered for Apia, he went for'ard on some excuse, but in reality to talk to the Greeks in the fore-peak. He was absent about a quarter of an hour, and then went about his duties as usual.

"A little before six bells, Captain Marston was on the poop looking at the land through his glasses, Mrs. Marston was in her cabin sewing, Villari, with the boatswain and three A.B.'s (all Englishmen), were with the steward and third mate engaged in the lazzarette overhauling and re-stowing the provisions. Suddenly the captain was felled by a blow on the head dealt him from behind, and the mate and those with him were at the same moment ordered by Almanza to come up out of the lazzarette. He told them that he was in possession of the ship, and that they would be shot down if they attempted to resist. Villari and his men came up, and found the second mate and six of the mutineers in the cabin, all armed with pistols and cutlasses. Resistance was useless, and Almanza told

Villari not to think of it. He (Villari) was then hustled into his own cabin and locked in, and the English seamen ordered on deck, where they, with the other Englishmen on board, were made to hoist out the longboat. Whilst this was being done Almanza, who had locked Mrs. Marston in her cabin, opened the door, and told her that she need feel no fear, but that she must come on deck to attend to her husband, who had been hurt. She found Marston lying where he fell, and quite unconscious, with a Chileno standing guard over him. As the English members of the crew were hoisting out the longboat, Almanza told the steward—a negro—to get some provisions and some bottles of wine from the cabin. Then the two Greeks—who from the first had seemed bent on murder—interfered, and one of them suddenly raised his pistol and shot the unfortunate steward through the heart. The Chileno seamen applauded the act, and only Almanza's frenzied protests prevented them from slaughtering the unarmed Englishmen, the Greeks declaring that they (the mutineers) were only putting ropes round their necks by sparing any one of them—including Mrs. Marston.

"For some minutes it seemed as if there was to be a conflict between Almanza and his followers, but the mutineers appeared to yield to his appeals, and assisted in getting the longboat out. The captain was then lowered into the boat, and then Mrs. Marston and all the Englishmen but two followed; when suddenly Villari, who had succeeded in forcing his door, sprang up from the cabin with a pistol in each hand, and

singling out Almanza, shot him through the chest, and with the second shot wounded one of the Chilenos in the face. But in another instant he himself fell, for the Greeks and several of the gang fired at him simultaneously, and he was also given a fearful blow on the head with a belaying-pin, partly stunning him, and then thrown overboard to drown. The two men remaining on deck saved their lives by jumping overboard at the same time.

"Most fortunately for the poor mate he fell near the boat, and was rescued by one of the seamen, who sprang overboard after him. But not satisfied with what they had already done, and enraged at the fall of their leader, the mutineers now began firing into the defenceless people in the boat at such a short range that it is marvellous that any one escaped.

"Before they were able to pull out of range, the captain, third mate, and one of the seamen were mortally wounded, and two others and Mrs. Marston also were hit. Then the mutineers, evidently bent on the slaughter of the whole party, began to lower away one of the heavy quarter-boats, but although she was actually put in the water the villains changed their minds for some reason, and the longboat was not pursued."

"Ah!" said Frewen, "I expect they were afraid to leave the ship in case a breeze sprang up."

"So Villari says. However, they then began firing round shot at the longboat from the two nine-pounders on the quarter-deck—the *Esmeralda* is armed with six guns—but made such bad practice that after half a

dozen shots had been fired they gave up the attempt.

"The ship at this time was in the Straits of Manono, and the boat was headed for the nearest land, which was Samatau—the four unwounded men keeping to the oars most manfully, only taking short spells every hour. As darkness came on they saw the lights of Samatau village, and came on without fear, for they knew that the natives of Samoa, though very warlike, were hospitable and friendly to Europeans. During the night the third mate and the badly wounded A.B. died, and poor Marston, who had never spoken since he had been first struck down, lay as you saw him a little while ago, without the slightest sign of returning consciousness. Villari, however, began to improve, and weak as he was, yet contrived to show one of the men how to dress Mrs. Marston's wound in a more efficient manner. He *is* a plucky little fellow.

"The boat would have reached here much sooner, only that Villari and his people could not find the passage through the reef, and several times struck on coral patches.

"Well, that is the whole of the story—and a very dreadful one it is too. I do feel so for that poor little woman. Her heart is breaking."

"Ay, indeed," said Frewen, "poor thing! She seems hardly more than a girl."

"However, please God, we shall get her husband's ship back," and Raymond's dark eyes sparkled. "Ah! here comes the chief. He will not fail us. He is one of the most renowned fighters in Samoa, is he not, Randall?"

## CHAPTER VI

MALIE, the supreme chief of the district, was indeed, as Raymond said, one of the most renowned fighters, not only on Upolu, but in all Samoa, and Frewen, as he shook hands with him, thought he had never seen so noble and imposing a figure. He was a man of about sixty years of age, with closely-cropped white hair and thick moustache, but so youthful was he in his carriage, and so smooth was the bright copper-red of his skin, that he seemed more like a man of thirty whose hair and moustache had become prematurely blanched. The upper portion of his huge but yet beautifully proportioned and muscular figure was bare to the waist, around which was wrapped many folds of tappa cloth bleached to a snowy whiteness, which accentuated the startling contrast of the bright blue tattooing which reached from his waist to his knees. Depending from his neck, and falling in a long loop across a broad chest scarred by many wounds, was a simple yet beautiful ornament consisting of some hundreds of discs of gleaming pearl-shell, perforated at the sides, and strung together by a thin cord of human hair. In his right hand he carried a *fui*, or fly-wisp, made of coco-nut fibre, and Frewen noticed during the conversa-

tion that followed that he used this with the dainty grace that characterises a Spanish lady with her fan.

Accompanying the chief was a tall, thin old man, named Talitaua, who was Maliē's *tulāfale* or orator—a position which in Samoa is one much coveted and highly respected, for the *tulāfale* is in reality a Minister of War, and on his public utterances much depends. If he is possessed of any degree of eloquence, he can either avert or bring about war, just as he chooses to either inflame or subdue the passions of his audience when, rising and supporting himself on his polished staff of office, he first scans the expectant faces of the throng seated on the ground before him ere he opens his lips to speak. On this occasion, however, Talitaua had merely come with Maliē as a personal friend anxious to learn privately what he would probably have to communicate to the assembled people as soon as the discussion with Raymond was concluded. Both he and the chief had already heard full details of the mutiny from Raymond, and they guessed that the planter had something further and of importance to say to them concerning it. After the usual courtesies so rigidly observed on visits of ceremony had passed between them and Raymond, they patiently awaited him to begin, though very curious to learn what was the occasion of Frewen's and Cheyne's unlooked-for appearance. Their natural politeness, however, as well as the never-to-be-infringed-upon Samoan etiquette, utterly forbade them to make even the slightest allusion to the matter; they would, they knew, learn in good time.

Seating themselves on chairs in European fashion at

one side of the table, whilst Raymond and his two companions occupied those opposite, they first made inquiry as to the wounded men and Mrs. Marston, and the planter answered their polite queries. Then after a pause Raymond began by saying—

"This *alii* * is named Mr. Frewen. He is an officer of a *vaa soia*,† and is a friend of my wife's brother, and therefore is a friend of mine—and thine also, Maliē toa o Samatau,‡ and Talitaua."

The chief and his orator bent their heads, but said nothing beyond a simple *Lelei, lelei lava* ("Good, very good").

Then Raymond went to the point as quickly as possible, and asked the chief if he would assist him, Frewen, and Cheyne in recapturing the ship from the mutineers. Speaking, of course, in Samoan, he said—

"As thou seest, Maliē, the wind hath died away, and the ship is becalmed, so that the murderers on board cannot escape us if we do but act soon and come upon them suddenly."

The chief thought for a few moments, then answered—

"I will not refuse thee anything in reason that thou asketh me, Lēmonti. But yet my people must be told of what is in thy mind."

"True. They shall know. But before I unfold to thee my plan to take this ship by surprise so that but little or no blood may be shed, I will pledge myself to

* Chief—gentleman.

† A whale-ship.

‡ His full title, "Maliē, warrior of Samatau." The present King Maliētoa of Samoa is a descendant.

the people of Samatau and to thee to act generously to them for the help they will give. The captain is hurt to death and cannot speak, and the lady his wife is too smitten with grief to consider aught but her husband, so on her behalf do I speak; for she is my countrywoman, and it would be a shameful thing for me did I not help her."

Then he went on, and clearly and lucidly detailed his scheme to the chief, afterwards translating his remarks into English for the benefit of Frewen, who listened with the keenest interest. Cheyne, of course, understood Samoan perfectly.

Raymond's plan was simple enough.

He proposed to take the *Casilda's* boat, and with Frewen, Cheyne, and a few natives go boldly off and board the ship, and representing himself as a trader anxious to buy European provisions, begin to work by throwing the mutineers off their guard, by warning them of the danger the ship was in through being in so close to the land during a calm, for the currents in the Straits of Manono were very strong and she would be carried on to the reef unless she was towed out of the danger limit towards which he would say (and truthfully enough) that she was drifting. The mutineers, he felt convinced, would feel so alarmed that they would listen to and accept his suggestion to let him engage the services of half a dozen native boats, whose united efforts would soon place the ship out of danger by towing her out of the danger zone. Then he and those with him would bide their time, and at a given signal spring upon the mutineers, who would be completely off their guard.

He entered into the details so minutely that not only Frewen and Cheyne, but Maliē as well, expressed the warmest admiration and approval. Then he told Maliē exactly what to do when he (the chief) saw the whale-boat leaving the ship to return to the shore, and Maliē listened carefully to his instructions and promised that they should be carried out exactly as he desired.

Then the stalwart chief and his orator rose to take their leave, for they had to call the people together and acquaint them with what was to be done.

"Have no fear, Lēmonti, that the calm will break," he said in reply to a fear expressed by the planter that a breeze might, after all, spring up and carry the ship too far off the land for the attempt to be made. "'Tis a calm that will last for many days. Look at the mountains of Savai'i"—and he pointed out the cloud-capped summits of the range that traverses the great island of Savai'i—"when the clouds lie white and heavy and low down it meaneth no wind for many days, not as much as would stir a palm-leaf. But there will be rain at night—much rain."

"The better for our purpose," said Raymond, as the chief left the house. "Now, Randall, we must hurry along. Take half a dozen of my people, and let them catch a couple of pigs and plenty of fowls; then cut about a dozen or so large bunches of bananas and get enough other fruit—pineapples, sugar-cane, guavas, and young coco-nuts as will make a big show in the boat. Mr. Frewen and I will join you in about a quarter of an hour, and then you and he can show the natives how to stow the things, as I have suggested to the chief."

Returning to the house he sought out his wife.

"Marie, we are going to recapture that ship. Don't be alarmed, and don't say anything to poor Mrs. Marston till you see us returning; but you may tell the mate."

Mrs. Raymond never for one instant thought of trying to dissuade her husband from a mission which she felt was full of danger. She kissed him, and said, "Tell me what to get ready, Tom."

## CHAPTER VII

IT was three o'clock in the afternoon, and the decks of the *Esmeralda* gleamed dazzlingly white under the burning rays of the Samoan sun, as she lay motionless upon a sea as calm as some sheltered mountain lake or reed-margined swamp hidden away in the quiet depths of the primeval forest. Twenty miles away to the south and east of the ship, the purple-grey crests of the mountains of Savai'i rose nearly five thousand feet in air, and, nearer the long verdant slope of beautiful Upolu stretched softly and gently upwards from the white beaches of the western point to the forest-clad sides of Mount Tofua—ten miles distant. Still nearer to the ship, and shining like a giant emerald lying within a circlet of snow, was the island of Manono, the home or birthplace of all the chiefly families of Samoa for many centuries back. Almost circular in shape, and in no place more than fifty feet in height, it was covered with an ever-verdant forest of breadfruit, pandanus, orange and palm-groves, broken here and there by the russet-hued villages of the natives, built just where the shining beach met the green of the land. And the whole seemed to float on the bosom of the lagoon, which, completely encompassed by the barrier reef, slumbered peacefully—its waters undisturbed except when they moved responsive

to the gently-flowing current from the blue ocean beyond, or were rippled by the paddle of a fisherman's canoe. A mile beyond Manono, and midway between it and the "iron-bound" coast of Savai'i, was the little volcanic isle of Apolima—once in olden times the fortress that guarded the passage through the straits, now occupied only by a few families of fisher-folk dwelling in peace and plenty in the village nestling at the foot of the long-extinct volcano. Overhead a sky of wondrous spotless blue.

* * * * *

On the quarter-deck of the *Esmeralda* three of the mutineers were seated together under the shade of a small temporary awning, engaged in an earnest conversation. A fourth person—Almanza—who was at that moment the subject of their conversation, was lying in the captain's stateroom, immediately beneath them; the rest of the gang were idling about on the main or fore decks smoking their inevitable cigarettes, and waiting till the Levantine "Ryan," whom they now recognised as leader, called them to hear the result of the discussion.

The Chileno, who was seated with Ryan and Foster, was named Rivas, and had recommended himself to them by reason of his ferocious and merciless disposition. Long before the mutiny occurred he, with the Greeks, had insisted upon the necessity of murdering not only the captain, first officer, steward, and all the English seamen, but Mrs. Marston as well. Almanza, however, protested so strenuously that they reluctantly consented not to resort to murder, if it could possibly be avoided; but their lust for slaughter was too great to be controlled

when Villari made his gallant attempt to aid his captain.

On the top of the skylight was spread a chart, at which Ryan was looking, trying to find out as near as he could the ship's position. He could read English, and easily recognised the islands of Apolima and Manono, both of which were shown on the chart.

"That is where we are now, or about there," he said, taking a pencil in his hand and making a mark on the spot. "But we are drifting towards the reefs, and must anchor once we get into soundings—or else go ashore."

"Do you think he is going to die?" inquired Rivas, with a gesture towards the cabin.

"How can I tell, comrade?" replied the Greek with an angry snarl. "Only that we want him badly to navigate the ship, it would be best for us if he does die—for two reasons."

His fellow-scoundrels nodded assent. The two reasons they knew were, firstly, that Almanza had proved to be too timorous as regarded the taking of life, and secondly that his death would give them a greater share of plunder.

"Well, what are we to do?" asked Rivas.

"What can we do?" exclaimed Foster fiercely, as he shook his black-haired, greasy and ear-ringed head. "We must wait and see if he gets better—unless we drift ashore in the night and get our throats cut by los Indios over there," and he indicated the islands.

"Bah!" growled his countryman. "Did I not tell you that I heard the captain say over and over again that these people are not savages? But what we do want is a breeze, so that we can work off the land—for how are a few

men going to tow a heavy ship like this against a two-knot current? We could not move her." Then he called out, with a sneering inflection in his tones, "Come aft, comrades, and we shall drink to our *brave* captain's speedy recovery."

The rest of the mutineers but one obeyed with alacrity, just as the man who remained, and who was standing on the topgallant foc'sle, gave a loud cry—

"A boat is coming from the shore!"

In an instant confusion ensued; but Ryan, picking up Marston's glass, angrily bade them be silent. The boat had approached to within a mile of the ship, and Ryan saw that she was pulling four oars.

"It is not the captain's boat, *amigos*," he said, "and there seem to be only a few people in her. But be ready."

The *Esmeralda*, in addition to the six guns she carried, was plentifully provided with small-arms—enough for a crew of thirty men; and all of these, as well as the big guns, were kept loaded, for after the escape of the captain's boat the mutineers had worked most energetically to put the ship in a state of defence—both Almanza and Ryan recognising the possibility of the survivors of Marston's party reaching Apia, and there obtaining assistance to enable them to recapture the ship.

The boat came on steadily, the blades of her four oars flashing in the bright sunlight. Ryan continued to look at her, and felt quite satisfied when he saw she contained but seven persons, three of whom were Europeans, and four natives.

"It is a whale-boat," he cried; "and there are three

white men in her and four natives. She is very deep in the water, and I can see a lot of green stuff in the bows." (These were the bunches of bananas, purposely stowed in a pile for'ard, so as to indicate the boat's peaceful mission.)

The mutineers—with the exception of the two Greeks—who remained on the quarter-deck, dressed in Marston's and Villari's clothes—stood in the waist. All were armed with pistols, and a number of loaded muskets were lying along the waterways close to their hands, if needed.

When within easy speaking distance of the ship Ryan went to the rail and hailed the boat.

"Boat ahoy!"

The four oars ceased pulling, and Frewen, who was steering, stood up and answered the hail.

"Good morning, captain. I've seen you since daylight. You are drifting too close in, so I've come off to warn you to tow off."

"Come on board, please," replied the Greek, who, as Frewen spoke, saw that the boat was deeply-laden with fruit; and the cackling of fowls and sudden squeal of a pig convinced him that everything was right. And then, in a few minutes, Frewen and Raymond clambered up the side and walked quickly aft to where Ryan stood on the poop.

"How do you do, captain?" said Frewen, holding out his hand. "Where are you from, sir?"

"Valparaiso to Batavia," was the glib reply, as the mutineer shook hands with his visitors. "Are you living on shore there?" and he nodded towards Samatau.

"Yes, this is my partner. We have a cotton plantation there. We have brought you off a boatload of fresh provisions. Perhaps you can spare us a cask of salt beef in exchange? Pork is the only meat we have on shore."

"Very well, I can easily do that," was the reply.

Frewen went to the side and hailed the watchful Cheyne.

"Pass up all that stuff, Randall," he said.

Aided by the Chileno seamen, Cheyne and the four natives soon cleared the boat of the livestock and fruit, whilst Ryan, who had not yet asked his visitors below, continued to talk to them on deck, although he told one of the crew, whom he addressed as "steward," to bring up refreshments.

"Now, captain," continued Frewen, speaking in the most friendly manner, "you must set to and tow your ship away from here as quickly as possible, or you will go ashore if this calm lasts. You can't anchor anywhere near here, the water is too deep."

"Perhaps you will help me? I am short-handed. Twelve of my crew took the longboat and deserted from me during the voyage, and I am in a tight place."

"Oh, well, captain, we must try and help you out of it to the best of our ability." He raised his glass. "I am glad to have met you, Captain——," and he paused.

"Ryan is my name. The ship is the *Esmeralda*."

"And a beautiful ship she is, too. You must be proud to command such a splendid vessel, sir."

"She is a fine ship," was the brief reply. "Now will you please tell me how you are going to help me?"

## CHAPTER VIII

FREWEN seemed to think for a moment or two ere he replied; then he looked at Raymond inquiringly.

"How long would it take to send to Falealili,* and ask Tom Morton, the trader, to come with his two boats and help the captain?" he asked.

"A day at least—too long altogether with such a strong current setting the ship towards the reef."

"Ah, yes, I daresay it would," he said meditatively; then, as if struck with a sudden inspiration, he added quickly, "What about Maliē? He has any number of boats—a dozen at least."

"Just the man!" replied Raymond. "He will let the captain have all the boats and men to man them that are wanted—but he'll want to be paid for it."

"Certainly," interrupted the mutineer, who little imagined how adroitly he was being meshed. "I'll pay anything reasonable. Who is he?"

"Oh, he is a big chief living quite near me, and a decent enough fellow. He has a number of large native-built boats. The natives call them *taumualua*,

* A large native town on the south side of Upolu.

which means sharp at both ends.* They seat from six to eight paddlers on each side. Five, or even four such boats, well manned, would make the ship move along. Three or four hours' towing will put her into the edge of the counter current setting to the south and eastward away from the land, and then she'll be out of danger, no matter how long the calm lasts."

In a few minutes it was decided that the boat should return to the shore, where Raymond was to see the chief and arrange with him to provide five or six well-manned *taumualua*, which Frewen said should be alongside to receive the tow-lines within two or three hours.

As he (Frewen) was about to go over the side Ryan made a half apology for the ship's crew carrying arms, at which the young man smiled and said—

"Oh, a good many captains that touch at Samoa for the first time keep their crews armed, imagining the natives might try to cut them off. But the Samoans are a different kind of people to the savages of the Western Pacific; there has only been one ship cut off in this group, and that must have occurred fifty years ago." †

Just as he had taken his seat beside Raymond and Cheyne, the Greek said politely—

"If there is no necessity for both of you gentlemen to go on shore again, won't one of you stay on board and have some supper?"

* These boats are usually built from the wood of the breadfruit-tree. Not a single nail is used in their construction; every plank is joined to its fellow by lashings of cocoanut fibre.

† A fact.

This was just the invitation that Frewen was looking for, but he appeared to hesitate for a moment or two.

"Thank you, captain, I think I *will*. There is certainly nothing for me to do on shore that my partner cannot do as well or better than myself. And I should like to hear any news from Europe that you may have to tell."

As he clambered up the side again the boat pushed off, and the stalwart native crew sent her, now she was lightened of her load of provisions, skimming through the water.

When the American returned to the quarter-deck, Ryan introduced to him "Mr. Foster, my second mate," and added that in addition to the misfortune of losing twelve of his crew when coming through the Paumotu Group, his chief officer had accidentally shot himself, and shattered his collar-bone.

"Indeed!" said Frewen, with an air of concern, instantly surmising that the injured man was either Almanza or the Chileno sailor whom Villari had shot. "Is he getting on all right?"

"Not at all well—and unfortunately I do not know anything about a fractured collar-bone."

Frewen replied, with perfect truth, that he had seen several broken collar-bones. Perhaps he might be of assistance.

"Captain Ryan" thanked him, and said he would at once go down, see how the injured man was getting on, and would send for him in ten minutes or so. Meanwhile would Mr. Frewen join Mr. Foster in a glass of wine.

The young whaling officer sat down near the skylight, and as the dark-faced, dirty-looking ruffian seated opposite passed him, with an amiable grin, a decanter of excellent sherry, wondered which of the two Levantines was the greater cut-throat of the two. Ryan, as he called himself, was somewhat of a dandy. He did not wear ear-rings; and Villari's clothes—which fitted him very well—made him look as if he had been used to dress well all his life. Foster, on the other hand, who was arrayed in poor Marston's garments, was the typical Greek seaman one might meet any day in almost any seaport town of importance. He was a fairly tall man, well and powerfully built, but his hawk-like and truculent visage inspired the American with a deeper aversion than that with which he regarded Ryan—who, however, was in reality the more tigerish-natured of the two.

As they sat talking, Frewen happened to look along the deck for'ard, and caught sight of a seaman with the lower part of his face bandaged. He was standing at the galley door talking to some one inside, but happening to see the American looking at him, he hurriedly slipped round the for'ard end of the galley out of sight.

"Ah," thought Frewen, "that is the other fellow that Villari put out of action—the man below is Almanza."

His surmise he found was correct, for at the end of a quarter of an hour, Ryan, who had been giving Almanza all the news in the interval, appeared and asked him to come below and see the chief officer. He

led the way below, and entering the officer's cabin, said—

"Here is the gentleman from the shore, Mr. Almanza. Let him see your hurt."

The leader of the mutineers was evidently in great pain, and feverish as well, and Frewen in a few seconds found by examination that a splinter of the fractured bone had been driven into the muscles of the shoulder, where it seemed to be firmly embedded, although one end of it could almost be felt by gentle pressure, so close was it under the skin. The bullet itself had come out at the side of the neck.

Telling them that, although he was no doctor, he was sure that it was most important that the splinter of bone should be removed, he offered to attempt it. The fractured collar-bone, he assured them, would knit of itself if the patient kept quiet.

In those days the medicine chests of even fine ships like the *Esmeralda* were but poorly equipped, when contrasted with those to be found on much smaller vessels thirty years later, when antiseptic surgery and anæsthetics were beginning to be understood. But Almanza, who was in agony, begged the visitor to do what he could; and without further hesitation, Frewen took from the medicine chest what he considered was the most suitable knife, made an incision, and in less than five minutes had the splintered piece of bone out. Then came the agonising but effective sailor's styptic—cotton wool soaked in Friar's Balsam.

Almanza tried to murmur his thanks, but fainted, and when he came to again, he found himself much

freer from pain, and the poor negro steward's successor standing beside him with a tumbler of wine and water.

"You must keep very quiet," said Frewen, as he turned to leave the room, speaking coldly, for although he was very sympathetic with any one suffering pain, he could not but remember what the man before him had done.

Returning on deck, he found Foster and Ryan talking on the poop, whilst the crew of Chilenos were sitting about on the hatches eating pineapples and bananas, and drinking coconuts. Even a non-seafaring man would have thought that there was a lack of discipline displayed, but Frewen, whose life had been spent on whaleships where the slightest liberty on the part of foc'sle hands towards the after-guard meets with swift and stern punishment, felt as if he would have liked to have kicked them all in turn, and then collectively.

"Never mind," he thought to himself, "I trust they are all reserved for higher things—they all deserve the gallows, and I sincerely trust they will get it."

Both Ryan and Foster, he could see, had not the slightest doubt of his and Raymond's *bona-fides*, and at supper both men were extremely affable to him. At the same time he thought he could perceive that they were anxious as to what had become of the captain's boat, for they asked him casually if there was any shipping at Apia, or at any of the other ports in the group.

"Only the usual local trading vessels," he replied. "Whenever a stranger comes in—even if it is only a native craft—I get the news at my place by runners in an hour or two."

And Almanza's mind, too, was at rest, for when he was groaning in agony in his bunk, and he was told that a boat from the shore was coming alongside, he had started up and reached for his pistols. But Ryan had satisfied him completely.

"We could have shot every one of them before the boat came alongside, had we wanted to, *amigo*," he said.

"Had they no arms?" asked the wounded man.

"None—not so much as a cutlass even. Diego, Rivas, and Garcia, who helped them to discharge the boat, saw everything taken out of her but the oars and sails. There was a big man—a half-caste, who was dressed like a white man—in charge of the four Samoans. I asked him to come on deck and have a glass of grog; but he said his crew did not want him to leave the boat. They were frightened, he said, because our men had pistols in their belts."

Almanza gave a sigh of relief. "And you are sure they will return and tow us?"

"Sure, *amigo*."

And just as supper was over, and Frewen and Ryan returned to the deck, a sailor called out that the whale boat and five others were in sight.

"Ah, my partner is not the man to lose time in an important matter like this, Captain Ryan," said Frewen; "your tow-line will be tautened out before the three hours we mentioned."

## CHAPTER IX

SOON after Raymond and the old chief with his followers had set out for the ship, and when the swift tropic night had closed in upon the island, Captain Marston died. He was conscious when his kindly host and Randall Cheyne had returned, and before he passed away, thanked the planter sincerely for all that he had done for his wife, his crew, and himself; for he well knew that his end was near.

"I fear that nothing will ever be heard of my ship again," he said, in a whisper. "They will scuttle or burn her. My poor wife!" and he pressed her hand. "But thank God, Amy, you will not be quite penniless. "Mercado" (his agent in Valparaiso) "will have about two or three thousand pounds to pay you for some cargo he bought from me. You must go there. He is an honourable man, and will not seek to evade his liabilities. I know him well."

Raymond, whose heart was overflowing with pity for the dying man, could no longer restrain himself. At first he had decided not to say a word to Marston about the intended recapture of the ship, for fear it would excite him; but now, when he saw how calmly and

collectedly he spoke of her future to his wife, he changed his mind, and, bending down, said:—

"Captain Marston, I must say a few words to you and Mrs. Marston. I did not intend to do so just now, but I know that they will bring you peace of mind, and help you to recovery. I have good news for you."

Marston looked at him eagerly, and his wife, with her hands clasped, moved a little nearer to the planter, who was speaking in very low tones so as not to disturb or excite a man whom he knew was dying bodily, but whose brain was alive.

"Is it about my ship?"

"Yes. She is within six miles of this house, lying becalmed, and, before midnight, will be recaptured by some good friends of mine, and at anchor in this bay by daylight."

Marston's lips quivered, and the agonising look of inquiry and doubt in his eyes was so piteous to behold that Raymond went on more rapidly.

"You may absolutely rely upon what I say. The *Esmeralda* has been in sight since early in the forenoon. I boarded her this morning with the express purpose of seeing if it were possible to recapture her, and have only just returned. And I assure you on my word of honour that she *shall* be recaptured before midnight, without bloodshed, I trust; for the mutineers are completely off their guard, believing I am returning with fifty natives in several boats to tow the ship out of danger, purely out of kindness to their leader."

"You are indeed a good friend," murmured Marston slowly and haltingly. "My wife has told me your

name . . . I know my time is short. If you recapture my ship . . . she is worth six thousand pounds, and the specie on board amounts to nine thousand. I commend my wife to your care——"

Raymond pressed his hand, and urged him not to say anything further, but Marston, whose eyes were now lightened by that ephemeral light so often seen in the eyes of the dying, went on—

"I commend my wife to your care . . . and Villari—is he dead?"

"No, Harry," whispered Mrs. Marston, "he is not dead, but badly wounded."

"Poor Villari . . . a born sailorman, though an Italian. . . . Mr. Raymond, Amy. . . . Let him command. . . . I should have taken his advice. . . And give him five hundred pounds, Amy. . . . You, Mr. Raymond, will be entitled to a third of the value of the ship and her cargo. . . . You understand?"

"I will not take a penny," said Raymond, as he rose. "Now I must be going. But have no fear for the *Esmeralda*. She will be at anchor in this bay to-morrow morning."

Marston put his hand gently over towards him, and pressing it softly, Raymond withdrew.

His wife met him at the door. Her dark, Spanish-like face showed traces of tears, but she smiled bravely as he put his arms around her and kissed her.

"Tom, dear, you must not be angry. I have not been crying for fear that something may happen to you if there is a fight with those dreadful men on board the ship—for I am *sure* that you will come back to me and

our little one safe and sound—but I do so pity poor Mrs. Marston, Tom, if Captain Marston dies."

"I think that there is no possible hope of his recovery, dear."

"Then she must stay with us, Tom, for some time, until she is stronger. She will need to have a woman's care soon."

Raymond kissed his wife again. "As you will, Marie; you always think of others. And I shall be very glad if she will stay with us."

Ten minutes later she walked down to the beach, and watched her husband and Maliē with his followers depart, and then she slowly returned home along a winding path bordered by shaddock trees, whose slender branches were weighted down with the great golden-hued fruit. As she reached the verandah steps a pretty little girl of four years of age ran up to her, and held out her arms to be taken up.

"Where has father gone, Muzzie?" she said in English, and then rapidly added in Samoan, "*Ua alu ia i moana?*" ("Has he gone upon the sea?")

"Yes, Loisé. He has gone upon the sea, but will soon return. Where is Mālu?"

"Here, lady," replied a woman's voice in the soft Samoan tongue, and a pleasant-faced, grey-haired woman of fifty came down the steps, and took the child from her mother's arms, and as she did so, whispered, "The tide hath turned to the ebb." *

* Note by the Author.—Nearly all Polynesians and Micronesians believed most firmly that the dissolution of soul from body always (excepting in cases of sudden death by violence or accident) occurred when the tide is on the ebb. From a long experience of life in the

"Ay, good Mālu. I know it. So keep the child within thy own room, so that the house may be quiet."

Old Mālu, who had nursed Mrs. Raymond's mother, bent her head in assent, and went inside, and her mistress sat down in one of the cane-work lounge chairs on the wide verandah and closed her eyes, for she was wearied, physically and mentally. Her nerves had been strained greatly by the events of the day, and now the knowledge that within a few feet of where she sat, a life was passing away, and a woman's heart was breaking, saddened her greatly.

"I must not give way," she thought. "I must go and see how the wounded men are doing."

But ere she knew it, there came the low but hoarse murmuring cries of myriad terns and gulls flying homewards to the land, mingled with the deep evening note of the blue mountain pigeons; and then kindly slumber came, and rest for the troubled brain and sorrowing heart.

She had slept for nearly an hour when a young native girl servant, who had been left to wait upon Mrs. Marston, came quickly but softly along the verandah and touched her arm.

"Awake, Marie,* and come to the white lady."

Pacific Islands, the writer is thoroughly imbued with and endorses that belief. The idea of the passing away of life with the ebbing of the tide will doubtless seem absurd to the European and civilised mind, but it must be remembered that an inborn and inherited belief, such as this, does, with many so-called semi-savage races, produce certain physical conditions that are well understood by pathologists.

* It will doubtless strike the reader as being peculiar that an educated and refined woman such as I have endeavoured to portray

She rose and followed the girl to the room where Marston lay. His wife was kneeling by him with her lips pressed to his.

Marie Raymond knelt beside her, and passed her arm around her waist.

in Mrs. Raymond would allow a servant to address her by her Christian name. But the explanation is very simple: In many European families living in Polynesia and in Micronesia the native servants usually address their masters and mistresses and their children by their Christian names—unless it is a missionary household, when the master would be addressed as "Misi" (Mr.) and the mistress as "Misi fafine" (Mrs.). The difference does not in the least imply that the servant speaks to the lay white man and his wife in a more familiar manner than he would to his spiritual teacher. No disrespect nor rude familiarity is intended—quite the reverse; it is merely an affectionate manner of speaking to the employer, not *as* an employer, but as the friend of the household generally. It is related of the martyred missionary John Williams, that a colleague of his in Tahiti once reproved a native youth for addressing Mr. Williams as "Viriamu" (Williams) instead of "Misi Viriamu" (Mr. Williams), whereupon the pioneer of missionary enterprise in the South Seas remarked—"It does not matter, Mr. ——, I infinitely prefer to be called 'Viriamu' than 'Tione Viriamu Mamae' (the Sacred, or Reverend, John Williams)."

## CHAPTER X

CLOSELY followed by the five native boats, that in which Raymond was seated with Maliē, and which was steered by Randall Cheyne, first came alongside, and the latter called out to Foster, who was standing in the waist, to pass down the end of the tow line. This was at once done, and then, as Maliē and Raymond left the boat and ascended to the deck, Cheyne went ahead with his tow line, and was soon joined by the native craft, and within a quarter of an hour the *Esmeralda* was moving through the water.

The instructions given to the half-caste by the chief and Frewen were to tow the ship to the south-east, with the land on the port hand. This would not only take her out of danger, but would prevent suspicion being engendered in the minds of the mutineers by their seeing that she was actually being taken away from, instead of towards the land. Both Frewen and Maliē had decided that she was not to be re-captured till she was well into soundings, for events might arise which would necessitate her being brought to an anchor, especially if continuous heavy rain should fall during the night.

As soon as Raymond and the stalwart chief ascended to the poop, the pseudo-captain received them most affably, complimented them on the smart manner in which the boats had gone ahead with the line, and then asked them to take some refreshment. The offer was accepted, for neither had had the inclination to eat anything on shore—they, like their men, were too eager to get possession of the ship to trouble about food.

Ryan sat at the table with them as they ate, and repeated his fiction regarding the accident to his chief officer, at which the planter politely expressed his concern. Then the mutineer, in a casual sort of a way, asked Raymond if there had been any English or American war-ships cruising about Samoa lately.

"No, not for a long time, but I did hear that the American corvette *Adams* was expected here last year, but she must have passed by here, and gone on to Fiji. There is always work for a man-of-war there at any time—the Fijians are a rough lot, and hardly a month passes without some European trader or sailor being killed and eaten, or else badly hurt. Even at the present time all the people living in the eastward islands of the Fiji Group are rank cannibals. It is a place to be avoided."

"Ah, well, I won't go near there," said the mutineer, somewhat meditatively.

"No, of course not," said the planter; "I suppose that your course for Batavia will take you to the north-west after you leave here—Fiji is six hundred miles to the south-west."

"I did think of putting in there when my mate met with his accident—thought I would find a doctor there; but now, thanks to your friend, I shall not need one for him—he is much better already."

"That is fortunate," said Raymond: "he might have died before you could reach the port of Levuka in Fiji. And besides that, I doubt if you would find a doctor living there. I have never heard of any medical man being settled in Fiji. On the other hand you could have left him on shore, where he would at least have met with good nursing from some of the English ladies there; and you could easily have obtained another mate; there are dozens of ex-skippers and mates idling about in Fiji."

Ryan had learnt all he wanted to know, and he changed the subject. He was still anxious about Almanza not living—for no one could tell what might occur to the *Esmeralda* if he died and the ship was left without a navigator. He (Ryan) and Foster would have had no objection to ridding themselves of him, were either one of them able to navigate the ship as far as the Philippine Islands. They had all three previously agreed with the rest of the crew as to their future plans, after they had disposed of Marston and those who were faithful to him. When within sight of Luzon—and abreast of Manila—the ship was to be scuttled, and the mutineers with their plunder in two boats were to make for a part of the coast where there was a village, well-known to Rivas and Garcia. Here the money was to be divided, and every man was to shift for himself—some to go to Manila, others taking passage to that den

of thieves, the Portuguese settlement of Macao, where they meant to enjoy themselves after their manner.

When Raymond and the chief returned on deck, they found the ship was making good progress through the smooth sea, the natives in the boats singing a melodious chorus as, all in perfect unison, they plunged their broad-bladed paddles in the water, and the tow line surged and shook off thousands of phosphorescent drops at every united stroke. The night was dark, but not quite starless, and presently Frewen, who was talking to Foster, remarked that some heavy rain would fall in a short time.

"Our natives won't like that," said Raymond to "Captain Ryan"; "like all Kanakas, they hate being wetted with rain, though they will spend half a day in the rivers bathing and playing games in the water."

"A few bottles of grog will keep up their courage," said Frewen, "especially some rum. Have you any to spare, captain?"

"Any amount."

"Then I'll tell Cheyne to let the boats come alongside in turn, and we'll give all the natives a good rousing nip before the rain comes."

He walked for'ard and stood on the topgallant foc'sle and gave a loud hail.

"Boat ahoy!"

The singing ceased in an instant, and then Randall's voice answered—

"Hallo! what is it?"

"Come aboard and get a glass of grog. Tell the men in the other boats they can follow in turn."

"Ay, ay, sir," replied the half-caste in such loud tones that he was heard distinctly on the after-deck, "they'll be glad enough of it; we'll get plenty of cold fresh water presently outside, and some rum to put inside will be just the thing."

Both Raymond and the two Greeks laughed, and then a minute or two later Cheyne and his boat's crew were alongside, and were given a pint of rum between them. They drank it off "neat," and after lighting their pipes, went back to their boat, and let another come alongside. She was manned by a dozen natives, who were all given a stiff glass of grog. They remained but a few minutes, and then went off to give place to the third boat, in which were twenty men. They scrambled over the side, laughing and talking, and then, just as the first five or six of them had been served, the rain poured suddenly down and made such a terrific noise that the shouts of the men in the other boats could not be heard, and the ship was at once enveloped in a thick steamy mist, which rendered even objects on deck invisible.

"It will only last about ten minutes," shouted Frewen to Ryan as they, with Raymond and Maliē, took shelter in the companion-way.

"Where are all those men of yours?" asked the mutineer somewhat anxiously.

Frewen's answer reassured him. "All bolted for shelter," he said with a laugh, "without even waiting to get their grog. I hope your men will let them crawl in somewhere." Then turning to Maliē, he said in English—

"Call to them, Maliē."

Maliē stepped out on the deck, and presently Ryan and the others heard him speaking. In a minute or two he reappeared with three or four stalwart natives, all dripping wet, and said something to Raymond, who translated the remark to Ryan.

"All the others have bolted like rabbits, some into the galley, and others into the foc'sle," he said.

In less than the ten minutes predicted by Frewen the rain ceased as if by magic; the natives gathered together again on the main deck, completed their grog drinking, went into their boat again, and pushed off to resume their labour.

In the course of another half an hour every one of the native boats' crews had had his small tumblerful of neat rum, and then, as their paddles plunged into the placid water, once more they sang their chorus—

"*Alō, tamaaiti, Alō foe!*" ("Pull, boys, pull!")

## CHAPTER XI

SIX bells struck, and then once more the stars went out, and the sky changed from blue to dull grey.

"Very heavy rain will fall again presently," said Raymond to the leader of the mutineers, "and as the ship is well now in the counter current and out of danger, the chief would like to call his men alongside for a rest. But we'll tow you for another mile or so after the rain ceases—if you wish it."

Ryan was keenly anxious to put as much distance between the land and the *Esmeralda* as possible, for he was haunted by the fear that the captain's boat had been picked up by some ship which might be sighted at any time. The further away from the land, the safer he would feel.

"I should like them to tow me along for another hour or two, after the rain is over," he said. "I will pay liberally."

Raymond spoke to the chief in Samoan and told him the captain's request, and Maliē answered in the same language.

"As you will, Lēmonti. But why toil any longer? My men are all ready and anxious. We can take the ship now at any time, once my men are here."

"And I, too, am ready, Maliē. But it was in my mind to wait and see if, when the bell strikes eight, half of the *auva'a* (ship's crew) would not go below to sleep, so that we shall have less disturbance."

"What matters it?" said Maliē with good-humoured contempt; "there are less than a score of them, and when the word is spoken they will be as easily overpowered and bound as a strong man can overpower and bind a child."

"Then let it be as you say," said Raymond in the same quiet tones; "let us call the men on board, and, when the bell is struck at midnight, we shall seize those evil men together—as the bell is struck the last time."

"Good!" said the chief, as he nonchalantly rolled himself a cigarette in a piece of dried banana leaf which he took from his tappa waist cloth. "I will tell them how to act."

"What does he say?" asked Ryan.

"He is quite willing, but he says his men are really tired now, and want a good long spell. They are not used to such work, and he does not want to give them cause for grumbling. They are very touchy sometimes. However, after the next downpour clears off, they will tow you another two or three miles." (And Raymond meant this literally, for he, Frewen, and the chief wanted to see the *Esmeralda* at anchor off Samatau by daylight.)

At a call from Raymond the boats came alongside, and as the crews clambered on deck Maliē told them how to dispose themselves about the ship so that when the signal was given the mutineers could be seized with-

out their being afforded any opportunity of resistance. Five or six of his best men followed him aft, whilst the others mingled with the crew, most of them going down into the foc'sle. The Chilenos, however, although satisfied of the friendly intentions of their visitors, were still a little nervous, for, despite the fact that none of the natives carried even so much as a knife, the wild appearance they presented was somewhat disconcerting to men who had never before come in contact with what they termed "savages." Fully one half of Maliē's followers were men of such stature that the undersized though wiry Chilenos looked like dwarfs beside them; then, in addition to this, their immense "mops" of bright golden hair—dyed that colour by the application of lime—and their wonderfully tatooed bodies, with the first intricate lines beginning at the waist and ending at the knees, accentuated the velvety and rich reddish brown of their skins. Each of the Chileno seamen still carried a brace of pistols in his belt and a cutlass hung by his side, but the natives apparently took no notice of such a manifestation of distrust, and they and the mutineers exchanged cigars and cigarettes as if they were the best friends in the world.

Suddenly the rain fell, and all other sounds were deadened by the downpour; it continued for three-quarters of an hour, and then, as Frewen remarked, ceased with a "snap."

In the main cabin Raymond, with Maliē, was seated at the table talking to Ryan; on the poop and under the shelter of the temporary awning were Cheyne, Frewen, Foster, the ruffianly Rivas, and two other of

the Chileno seamen, with three of the natives who had accompanied Cheyne and his friend from Lepā.

Five minutes before eight bells Foster turned to Rivas, and, speaking in Spanish, told him to go for'ard and tell the hands that there would be no watch below that night, all hands were to stay on deck till daylight.

Frewen gave Cheyne a glance, and the half-caste sauntered off after Rivas, whilst the three Samoans moved nearer towards the two Chilenos.

"Mr. Foster" went to the skylight and looked down into the cabin at the clock, which was placed so that it could be seen by any one standing beside the binnacle. Then he looked at a handsome gold watch, which two days previously had been in Villari's vest pocket, and, stepping to the break of the poop, called out—

"Eight bells!"

The big bell under the topgallant foc'sle sent out its deep, sonorous clang, and as the last note was struck, "Mr. Foster" went over on his back with a crash, and in another five seconds Frewen had turned him over on his face and was lashing his hands behind him. The Greek was too stunned to even try to speak, and when he came to again he found lying beside him Rivas and the other two Chileno sailors, with half a dozen Samoans standing guard over them.

Down in the cabin Raymond and Maliē had been equally as quick, and when Frewen and Cheyne came below they found "Captain" Ryan, together with the Chileno who was acting as steward, tied hand and foot and lying outside Captain Marston's stateroom door.

"Everything all right, Mr. Frewen?" inquired Raymond.

"Everything. All the gentry up for'ard are trussed up comfortably like fowls for cooking. No one has been hurt; Maliē's men simply picked the mongrels up by the scruff of their necks and then tied them up. The ship is ours."

"Then you are in command, Mr. Frewen. Please give your orders."

"Very well, Mr. Raymond. But first let me see to the distinguished Senor Almanza."

He opened the door of Almanza's stateroom. The Chilian was asleep. Frewen was about to touch and awaken him, but pity for a badly wounded man predominated, so he let him lie undisturbed.

"Now, Mr. Raymond, I am at your service. Will you ask Maliē to man his boats, and we will start towing again."

"With pleasure. But let us first call our good men together and drink success to ourselves and the *Esmeralda*. And then, whilst we are being towed towards Samatau, we can overhaul poor Captain Marston's cabin. All the specie, so this scoundrel tells me"—and he pointed to the Chileno steward—"is still in a safe in the captain's cabin, and has not yet been touched. But it was to be divided to-morrow."

And then Randall Cheyne sprang on deck and shouted out in Samoan—

"Friends, the ship is ours! Let ten men remain on board to guard these murderers, and the rest take to the boats and tow the ship to Samatau."

The willing natives answered him with a loud "*Aue!*" and ten minutes later the *Esmeralda* was again moving through the water.

An hour before daylight her cable rattled through her hawse-pipe, and she swung quietly to her anchor in Samatau Bay.

END OF BOOK I

## BOOK II

### CHAPTER XII

TWELVE months had come and gone, and Frewen, now "Captain" Frewen, was seated in the office of Ramon Mercado, the Valparaiso agent of the late captain and owner of the *Esmeralda*, which had arrived in port the previous day.

The worthy merchant—a little stout man with merry, twinkling eyes—was listening to the detailed story of the capture of the ship by the mutineers, her subsequent recapture, and of all that had occurred since she had been brought to an anchor in front of Raymond's house in Samatau Bay. Mercado himself, four months previously, had received a letter from Mrs. Marston, acquainting him with what had occurred up to the time of her husband's death, and telling him that the *Esmeralda*, as soon as a crew could be obtained, would sail under Frewen's command for Manila, and from there proceed to Newcastle, in New South Wales, and load a cargo of coal for Valparaiso. This letter had reached him by an American whale-ship which had touched at Samoa (a month or two after the *Esmeralda* had sailed

for Manila), and which, after cruising among the Galapagos Islands, had, as the master had told Mrs. Marston would be very likely, called at Valparaiso to refit.

* * * * *

A few days after the burial of Captain Marston his wife asked Frewen to take command of the ship, as Villari would be incapacitated for some months.

Villari himself had at first strenuously, and even somewhat bitterly, protested.

"Why should Mr. Frewen, much as he has done to help you to recapture the ship, be given command?" he said excitedly to Raymond. "Does Mrs. Marston distrust me? Do I not possess her confidence as I did that of her husband? Beg her to come to me. Surely she will not give the command of the ship to a stranger! I tell you, Mr. Raymond, that I would give my life for Mrs. Marston, as I was ready to give it for her husband," and his dark eyes blazed.

"There is no reflection either upon your integrity or ability, Mr. Villari," said the planter. "But here is the situation—and I am sure your own sound sense will make you approve of Mrs. Marston asking Mr. Frewen to take charge of the *Esmeralda*. And, before I go any further, I must tell you that Mr. Frewen not only did not seek the position, but said pointedly to Mrs. Marston—only an hour or two ago—that he would be quite satisfied to sail with you as mate. He is as honest as the sun. Pray do not for one moment imagine that he has supplanted you."

"Then let him come with me as mate," urged the Italian.

Raymond shook his head. "It is quite out of the question your taking command, Mr. Villari. You will not be able to get about for some months, and I, as a business man, see the necessity of the ship proceeding on her voyage as quickly as possible. She has a cargo that will bring a large sum of money to Mrs. Marston if it is delivered in Manila in good time. But in this humid climate it would become worthless in a few months. And it was purely my suggestion to Mrs. Marston to ask Mr. Frewen to take charge. She is, as you know, almost heartbroken at the calamity which has overtaken her. And then your remaining here will, I am sure, be a source of comfort to her, for she has the very highest opinion of you."

Villari's eyes sparkled with pleasure. "What! Is not Mrs. Marston sailing in the *Esmeralda?*"

"No; it will be better for her to remain here until the youngster comes. My wife and I will be only too glad to have her with us. It would be impossible for her to go to sea now her poor husband is dead. And she knows no one in Manila. So you must be content to remain here at Samatau as my welcome guest. Frewen will take the ship to Manila, and then decide as to his future course. He thinks that after selling the cargo at Manila he should proceed to Australia for a cargo of coal for Valparaiso. I think it a very sensible suggestion, especially as he can then see poor Marston's agent there and settle up with him regarding some money due to Marston."

The Italian's face assumed a placid appearance. "You are quite right, Mr. Raymond. And I shall

be content to remain here. *Per Bacco!* Mr. Frewen is a gentleman, and I wish him all good luck with the *Esmeralda*. But I should like the lady to know that I am prepared to return to the ship this moment if she so wishes it."

"She does know it, Mr. Villari. You have her full esteem and confidence—as you had that of her poor husband, who just before he died anxiously inquired about you, and said that he regretted not taking your advice concerning the two Greeks."

"Ah! Mr. Raymond," and the man raised and clenched his right hand, "I was a fool! I suspected that mischief was afoot that night when I found Almanza and the two Greeks talking together; I simply reported the matter to the captain, who thought nothing of it. Had I done my duty I should have watched, for no one can trust a Greek."

"Do not reproach yourself, Mr. Villari. I may as well tell you that poor Captain Marston, when he was inquiring about you just before he died, spoke in the highest terms of you, and asked Mrs. Marston to see that you were given five hundred pounds."

Villari raised himself on his elbow. "I swear to you, Mr. Raymond, that I do not want any money—compensation—reward—gift—call it what you will—for doing my duty as a seaman. Captain Marston was not only my captain, but my friend. And I would give my life for his wife. Tell her from me that it will hurt me if she even speaks of this money to me."

"As you will, Mr. Villari," said Raymond kindly, who saw that the Italian was excited. "I will tell her

to-morrow. But I trust you will now understand that Mr. Frewen had no desire to supplant you in any way."

"I understand. Can I see him now, for there is much that I have to tell him about the ship—things that he would like to know."

So Frewen came in, and he and the Italian mate had quite a long talk about the *Esmeralda*, and when they parted they did so with a feeling of growing friendship.

Anxious to obtain a reliable crew as quickly as possible, Frewen, on the following day, sent Randall Cheyne to Lepā to see if he could persuade the men who had deserted from the *Casilda* to come and help man the *Esmeralda*. But they were all too enamoured of island life to accept the offer he made them, which was generous enough—two hundred and fifty dollars each for the voyage to Manila. So Cheyne came back disappointed, and Frewen then went to Apia in the *Casilda's* whale-boat, and succeeded in engaging ten natives of Niué,* who, with half a dozen Samoans, made up a sufficient complement for the ship.

During this time Almanza and his fellow-mutineers had been confined on board the ship, guarded by a number of Maliē's warriors. Then to the joy of Raymond and Frewen there came into Apia Harbour a British gunboat bound from the Phœnix Islands to Sydney, and within forty-eight hours the planter, accompanied by the unwounded survivors of the English crew of the *Esmeralda*, were on board, and

* Niué, the "Savage Island" of Captain Cook. The natives are always in great request as seamen. Even to the present day most of the trading vessels carry a few Niué seamen.

related the tale of the mutiny to the captain of the man-of-war.

"I am letting myself in for a lot of trouble, Mr. Raymond," said the captain of the warship, "but I do not see how I can avoid it. I suppose that as the *Esmeralda* is a British ship and is now in distress I must be a sort of fairy godmother and take these beastly mongrels of Chilenos and Greeks to Sydney to be hanged on the evidence of these men whom you have brought. By the way, Mrs. Marston can have a passage with me if she wishes it."

Raymond thanked him, and said Mrs. Marston wished to remain at Samatau with his (Raymond's) wife for an indefinite time.

"Very well, Mr. Raymond. I should be delighted to give her a passage to Sydney, and I'm delighted she can't come. You understand me? I cannot refuse a passage to a lady in such circumstances as Mrs. Marston, but the *Virago* is a man-of-war, and—you know."

Raymond laughed. "I think I know what you mean, Captain Armitage; a lady passenger on a man-of-war would be a bit of a trial. But on Mrs. Marston's behalf I thank you sincerely."

"That's all right," said the bluff commander of the *Virago;* "now you can get home, and in a day or so I'll come round to Samatau and take these mutineering scoundrels into custody. Pity you did not get your Samoan friend Maliē to hang or shoot them out of hand. It would have saved Her Majesty's Government something in food, and me much trouble."

## CHAPTER XIII

"I MUST congratulate you, captain," said the merchant, when Frewen had finished his story; "and I trust you will always retain command of the *Esmeralda*. She is a beautiful ship, and, ever since you took charge, has proved herself a lucky one."

"I certainly have had great luck. We had a beautiful passage to Manila from Samoa, and from Manila to Newcastle I made the quickest run on record, and from there to Valparaiso we were only thirty-five days."

Some further conversation followed regarding the future movements of the ship, and it was arranged that she should load Chilian flour for Sydney, and from there proceed to Samoa for orders from her owner.

Three weeks later, Frewen bid the hospitable Mercado goodbye, and sailed for Sydney. The merchant had sold the cargo brought from Newcastle very satisfactorily, and in addition to the amount given him for this, Frewen also received from Mercado over two thousand pounds belonging to Captain Marston's estate.

The crew of the *Esmeralda* consisted of twenty men, ten of whom were either Englishmen, Americans, and Scandinavians, and ten stalwart natives of Savage Island. The first officer was a Dane named Petersen,

whom Frewen had engaged at Samoa. He was an excellent seaman, and took a great pride in the ship; the second officer was Randall Cheyne; and the third, a sturdy old Yorkshireman of sixty, with the frame and voice of a bull. Frewen was as satisfied with his officers as he was with his crew, and the exceedingly good fortune which had attended him since he had taken charge at Samatau had put him in a very pleasant frame of mind, and he was eagerly looking forward to meeting Mrs. Marston and rendering an account of his stewardship. When he reached Sydney from Manila he had placed a considerable sum to her credit, and learned that Captain Armitage, of the *Virago*, who had conveyed to Sydney the specie which was on board the *Esmeralda* when the mutiny had occurred, had safely deposited it in her name in the leading bank there. He found that the mutineers had been tried and sentenced; two of them, "Foster" and "Ryan," going to the gallows, whilst Almanza and the Chileno seamen all received long terms of imprisonment. The trial had aroused considerable excitement, and so, when the *Esmeralda* arrived, she was visited by many hundreds of people. In Sydney Harbour in those days might be seen numbers of the finest sailing vessels in the world; many of them were noted "crack" passenger ships trading between London and Sydney and Melbourne, but not one of them surpassed the *Esmeralda* in her graceful lines and beautiful appearance. Then, too, the extraordinarily quick passage she had made from Manila gave her further fame, and nearly all the ship masters in port called on board, and paid Frewen many compliments. Through the manager of the bank in

which he had deposited the money for Mrs. Marston, he was introduced to an excellent agent—a Mr. Beilby—who was a shipowner as well, and had for many years employed a fleet of small vessels in the South Sea Islands trade.

The voyage across the Pacific from Valparaiso to Sydney was disappointing—calms and light, variable winds being met with for nearly a month; and then between Australia and New Zealand, two weeks of savage westerly gales tried the ship's weatherly qualities to the utmost. However, after a passage of nearly seven weeks, she once more dropped anchor in the deep, blue waters of the most beautiful harbour in the southern hemisphere.

The agent at once came on board, and Frewen was glad to receive two letters from him—one from Raymond, the other from Mrs. Marston. The latter afforded him great pleasure to read, and was to the effect that she would be very glad to see him back in Samoa, as she wished to consult him in regard to a project of Mr. Raymond's.

"What the project is, he will himself explain to you in writing. I shall be very pleased if you and he come to an arrangement, especially as I have made up my mind to remain here at Samatau indefinitely with Mrs. Raymond, or somewhere near her, and as her husband may be away from her for many months at a time (this, however, all depends upon yourself) this will be equally as pleasant for her as for me. I feel that I have a home here, and in fact I may remain in Samoa altogether. Anyway, Mr. Raymond is now in treaty with Maliē for a

piece of land adjoining his own estate. If he secures it for me, I am having a house built upon it."

Raymond's letter was a voluminous one, but Frewen soon became deeply engrossed in its contents.

"My dear Frewen (let us now drop the 'Sir' and 'Captain,' for I am sure we each regard the other as a friend), I am now starting on a very long letter, and have but little time in which to finish it, for the *Dancing Wave*, by which I am sending it, leaves Apia to-morrow at daylight, and it will take a native runner all his time to cross over the mountains with it to Apia."

Then he went on to say that, about six months previously, Maliē had been approached by a German gentleman (who had just arrived from Hamburg) and asked if he would sell a large tract of land near Samatau. The chief at once consulted Raymond, who could not help feeling some natural curiosity as to the object of the German gentleman making such a large purchase of land so far away from the principal port of the group (Apia). Maliē could give him no information on the subject—all he knew was that he (Maliē) had been offered a very fair price for a tract of country that he was willing to lease, but not to sell, for on it were several villages, and the soil was of such fertility that the people would deeply resent their chief parting with it and making them remove to less productive lands.

On the spur of the moment—and feeling that there was some very good reason for the German making the chief such a substantial offer—Raymond said to Maliē—

"The German has offered you ten thousand dollars for the land, but will not lease it from you. Now I am not

a rich man, and even if you were willing to sell it to me for five thousand dollars, I could not buy it. But I will lease it from you for one year. I will not disturb any of your people, but at the end of the year I will make you another offer. There is some mischief on foot, Maliē. Let you and I go to Apia and find out who this man is, and why he is so eager to buy your land."

They set out together, and at Apia gained all the information they desired. The German gentleman was the agent of a rich corporation of Hamburg merchants who wished to purchase all the available land in Samoa for the purpose of founding a colony, the principal industry of which would be cotton-growing Cotton was bringing fabulous prices in Europe, and the corporation had already made purchases of land both in Fiji and Tahiti, and were using every effort to obtain more.

Raymond quickly made up his mind as to his course of action. He had a hurried interview with two other English planters, and a partnership of three was formed in half an hour. They had then made an agreement with Maliē and another chief to lease all the unoccupied country for many miles on each side of Samatau Bay.

"Now," the letter went on, "here is what we purpose to do. We are going to found the biggest cotton and coffee plantation in all the South Seas, and will make a pile of money. But the one all-important thing is to have plenty of labour, and that we can only obtain from other islands—New Britain, the Solomon Group, and thereabouts, and also from the Equatorial Islands. But it is risky work recruiting labour with small, weakly-

manned schooners. What is required is a big lump of a vessel, well armed, and with two crews—a white crew to work the ship and a native crew to work the boats. The *Esmeralda* is just the ship. She can carry six hundred native passengers, and in two trips we shall have all the labourers we want, instead of getting them in drafts of fifty or sixty at a time by small schooners—which would always be liable to be cut off and all hands killed—especially in the Solomon Islands.

"I laid our scheme before Mrs. Marston, and, to be as brief as possible, she is not only willing to let us charter her ship, but also wishes to take a share in the venture. But she wants you to keep command of the *Esmeralda*, as I trust you will."

Then followed a long list of stores, trade goods, arms, ammunition, &c., &c., which Raymond wished Frewen to purchase in Sydney, and the letter concluded with a request for him to leave for Samatau as quickly as possible.

On a separate sheet he made mention of Villari, saying that he had thoroughly recovered from his wound and was living at Apia.

"To tell you the truth, we are all glad he has gone away from us, for he fell madly in love with Mrs. Marston, and proposed to her, and took her kindly rejection of him very badly. He then left the house, but has twice since come to see her. At last she began to get alarmed at his conduct, and finally I had to frankly tell him that he was an undesirable visitor. It stung him deeply, but he persists in writing her the most passionate letters, asking her to reconsider her

decision. I am sorry for the fellow, as we all liked him. Frohmann, the new German doctor at Apia, told me that he believes the poor fellow is not 'all there' mentally."

## CHAPTER XIV

FREWEN showed his letters to the agent Beilby, who corroborated Raymond's statement in every particular regarding the money that could be made by growing cotton on an organised system with native labour, and with proper machinery to clean and pack it; and he also bore out the planter's remarks about the danger that attended small vessels employed in the black labour trade.

"You have seen a good deal of the natives of the South Sea Islands, Captain Frewen, and know what desperate cut-throats are those of the Western Pacific Groups. Two small trading vessels of my own have been cut off within the last five years, and every soul massacred, and the vessels looted and then burnt. It is a most difficult matter to keep a swarm of natives off the decks of a vessel with a low freeboard, all they have to do is to step out of their canoes over the rail, and if they are bent on mischief they can simply overpower a small vessel's company by mere weight of numbers. You will be surprised to hear that, even now, some of the Sydney trading craft use the old-fashioned boarding nettings, and their skippers only allow a certain number of natives on board at a time. But

with a large vessel like the *Esmeralda*, this very great source of danger—the low freeboard—is absent; and besides that, you can carry a crew large enough to squelch any attempt at a rising, if, after you get them on board, your gentle passengers took it into their heads to attempt to possess themselves of the ship."

"Just so. And I have heard of several instances where Honolulu and Tahiti labour vessels have been captured, even though they carried large crews and were well armed."

"Exactly! Just carelessness. You never know, when you have a hundred or so of these savages on board, what they may do. They all know that they are going to a foreign country to work on sugar or cotton plantations for three years, at the end of which they will be paid for their labour in guns, powder, beads, calicoes, &c., &c. Well, they come on board perfectly content, and all goes well for a week or two, until some of them begin to notice that the crew are not keeping such a good watch over them as they did when they first came on board. These fellows begin the mischief. 'Why should we not kill the white men on board?' (they will argue) 'and help ourselves to *everything*—guns, pistols, powder, and bullets, cutlasses, grog and tobacco, and all the other riches in the ship? It is much better than working for three years for one gun and one keg of powder and bag of bullets, a knife or two, and a few other things, and then bringing them back to our own country to be despoiled of them by our relations.' Do you understand, Captain Frewen?"

"Quite."

"Well, they lie low and wait, and when the opportunity comes the beggars set to work with a vengeance. Only three years ago one of the Hawaiian Islands labour vessels recruited ninety Gilbert Islands natives to work on the new sugar plantations near Honolulu. They behaved themselves splendidly—for they were well treated—for about a fortnight, and the skipper of the vessel (an old hand in the island trade) allowed them to lie on deck at night, feeling sure that they would give no trouble. More than this, he even told his officers and crew to discontinue carrying their Colts' pistols. The result was that one night, when the watch were taking in sail during a squall, the natives took possession of the brig, killed the mate and all the men of the watch who were on deck, and would certainly have slaughtered every one of the ship's company had it not been for the captain himself; who, hearing the noise, rushed up from below armed with a whale-ship bomb gun, loaded with slugs. He fired right into the mob of natives on the main deck, killed three or four, and wounded twice as many. Then the second mate and the rest of the watch below came tumbling up, headed by a big Nova Scotian A.B. He was a tremendously powerful fellow, and had armed himself with the carpenter's broad axe, and in a few minutes he cut down five of the natives, one of whom was the ringleader. Then the steward and supercargo turned up with nine-bore double-barrelled shot-guns, loaded with No. 1 shot, and they and the bluenose* practically saved the ship,

* A "bluenose" is a sailor's term for a Canadian or Nova Scotian.

or with their four shots they laid out nearly a dozen more natives, and the others bolted down to the hold and asked for quarter. Ah, Captain Frewen, there is nothing like buckshot or slugs to squash a mutiny. You must get some nine-bore guns made here to take away with you."

"Thank you for the suggestion, Mr. Beilby. But whalers' bomb guns—which can be easily procured in Sydney—are better still. You can load them with a small charge of powder and crushed rock salt, which won't kill a man, but which will prevent him from doing any mischief for a long time. When I was a boatsteerer some years ago on a New Bedford whaler—the *Aaron Burr*—we had serious trouble with about thirty Portuguese negroes we picked up off the coast of Brazil. They were in two boats, and were deserters from a Brazilian man-of-war, which had gone ashore off Santos. Many of our men were down with fever of some sort, and these black gentry (who were all armed with knives), thinking that the after-guard was not able to cope with them, came aft and told our skipper that if he did not give them all the liquor they wanted they would throw him overboard, set fire to the ship, and go ashore again. He seemed to be very much frightened—he was an undersized, quiet man—and begged them to go on deck and remain there whilst he and the steward and such of the officers who were not ill with fever would get up a keg of rum from the lazzarette. Then—he spoke Spanish pretty well—he asked them not to be too hard on him. He would treat them as gentlemen, &c., and, with apparently trembling hands, he gave

them boxes of cigars, and addressed them as if they were caballeros of the highest rank whom he was delighted to honour. Some of them cursed him for an Americano, but the majority were too hugely elated at the prospect of a keg of rum to say more to him than to hurry up with it.

"He did hurry up with a vengeance, for in five minutes he and the mate had each loaded a bomb gun with a heavy charge of sheet-lead slugs. They rushed on deck together, and with a warning cry to our men to get out of the way, they fired into the negroes, who were squatted about on the main hatch smoking their cigars and waiting for the rum. The effect was something terrifying, for although none of them were killed, fully half of them were wounded, and their groans and yells were something horrible. We did not give them much time to rally, for all of us who were well enough made a rush, and with belaying-pins and anything else which came to our hands drove them over the side into their boats."

"Then get some of those bomb-guns, captain, by all means. I think I have seen one—a thing like a bloated blunderbuss without the bell mouth."

"That's it," said Frewen with a laugh; "it is not a handsome weapon, but we whalemen do not go in for 'objects of bigotry and virtue.' A bomb-gun is made for a practical purpose—the stock is almost solid metal, and altogether it is no light weight."

During the following two weeks both Frewen and the agent were very busy. The former, with a gang of shore carpenters, was engaged in preparing the 'tween decks

of the ship for the reception of the native passengers, and constructing two movable gratings to go across the upper deck—one for'ard and the other aft—which, whilst they would practically allow the natives the free run of the deck, would yet prevent them from making any sudden onslaught on the crew.

Beilby, whose long experience of the South Sea Islands trade especially fitted him for the task, devoted himself to the work of fulfilling Raymond's orders as to the trade goods required, and in three weeks the *Esmeralda* was again ready for sea.

And when, under full sail, she passed down the harbour towards Sydney Heads bound for beautiful Samoa, her captain's heart swelled with pride as the crews of a score of other ships cheered, "Bravo, *Esmeralda!*"

## CHAPTER XV

UNDER a shady wild orange-tree which grew just above high-water mark on the white beach of Samatau Bay, Marie Raymond and Mrs. Marston were seated together on a cane lounge imagining they were sewing, but in reality only talking on subjects dear to every woman's heart.

Quite near them, and seated on mats, were the old nurse Mālu, who held Mrs. Marston's baby-girl, and Raymond's own little daughter Loisé, who was playing with a young native girl—Olivee—grey-haired old Mālu's assistant.

It was early in the morning—an hour after breakfast—and the two ladies had come down to the beach to watch Raymond and his partners and some hundreds of natives working at a jetty being constructed from slabs of coral stone, and which was to be carried out into deep water.

The day was delightfully bright, and the soft cool breath of the brave south-east trade wind, which rippled the blue of the ocean before them, stirred and swayed and made rhythmic music among the plumed crests of the graceful coco-palms above. And, as they talked, they heard, every now and then, Raymond's cheery

voice giving orders, and the workmen's response, which was generally sung, some one among them improvising a chant—for the Samoans, like many other Polynesian peoples, love to work to the accompaniment of song.

"Marie," said Mrs. Marston, as she let the piece of sewing which she held in her hand fall unheeded to the ground and looked dreamily out upon the blue ocean before them, "you must be a happy woman."

"I *am* a very, very happy woman, Amy. And I shall be happier still if you decide to remain and live near us. Oh, Amy, if you only knew how I try not to think of the possibility of your going away from us—to think that when you do go, it means that I may never see you again."

"I do not want to go away, Marie. I have told you the story of my life, and how very unhappy I was in my girlhood—an orphan without a friend in the world except my aunt, who resented my orphanage, and treated me as 'a thorn in the flesh,' but I did not tell you that until I met you I never had a girl or woman friend in all my life. And now I feel that as I have found one, I cannot sever myself from her, now that my husband is dead and I and the babe are alone in the world."

Marie Raymond passed her arms around her friend's waist. "Amy, dear, *do* stay in Samoa. I, too, have no woman friend except some of my mother's people—who would give their lives for me. But I am not a white woman. My mother's blood—of which I *am* proud—is in my veins, and when I was at school in Australia, it used to cut me to the heart to have to submit to insults from girls who took a delight in torturing and

harassing me because of it. One day I lost control of myself; I heard them whispering something about 'the wild girl from the woods,' and I told them that my mother could trace her descent back for five hundred years in an unbroken line, whilst I was quite certain none of them would like to say who their grandfathers were. My words told, for there were really five or six girls in the school who had the convict taint. I was called before the principal, and asked to apologise. I refused, and said that I had only said openly and under the greatest provocation what more than a dozen other girls had told me!"

"How did it end?"

"In mutual apologies, and peace was restored. But I was never happy there—I loathe the memory of my school days, and was glad to come back to Samoa."

"Neither were my English school days happy, but I even liked being at school in preference to staying with my aunt. I hated the thought of going to her for the holidays. She was a narrow-minded, selfish woman—a clergyman's widow, and seemed to take a delight in mortifying me by continually reminding me that all the money left by my father was £500, which would just pay for my education and no more. 'When you are eighteen,' she would say, 'you must not expect a home with me. Other girls go out as companions; you must do the same. Therefore try and fit yourself for the position.' Everything I did was wrong—according to her, I was rebellious, irreligious, too fond of dress, and lazy physically and mentally. The fact was, I was simply a half-starved, dowdy school-girl—often hungry

for food, and always hungry for love. If I had had a dog to talk to I should have been happier. My mother died when I was three years old, and my father two years later. Then, as I told you, I went out as governess to the Warrens when I was nineteen, and felt that I was a human being, for they were kind to me. Colonel Warren, a rough, outspoken old soldier with a red face and fierce-looking blue eyes under enormous white bushy eyebrows, was very kind to me. and so was his wife. I was not treated as so many governesses are treated in English families—as something between a scullery-maid and a housekeeper, for whom anything is good enough to eat, and any horrid, mean little room good enough to sleep in. When she came to say good-night to the children after hearing them say their prayers she would always ask me to come to her own room for an hour or two. I was very happy there. I was only a little over a year with them when I met and married Captain Marston."

"Some day, Amy, you will marry again."

"I don't know, Marie," said Mrs. Marston frankly. "I was thinking the other day that such a thing may be possible. I have no knowledge of the world, and am not competent to manage my business affairs. But there will be plenty of years to think of such a thing. I want to watch my baby grow up—I want her girlhood to be as bright and as full of love as mine was dull and loveless."

Presently a native boy came along the path carrying two letters. He advanced, and handed one to Mrs. Marston, whose cheeks first paled, and then flushed

with anger as she took it, for she recognised the handwriting.

"There is another letter for thy husband, lady," he said to Mrs. Raymond, "which also cometh from the *papalagi* * Villari."

Mrs. Raymond directed him where to find her husband, and then was about to return to the house, but her friend, who had not yet opened the letter in her hand, asked her to stay.

"Don't go, Marie. I shall not open this letter. It is too bad of Mr. Villari to again write to me. Shall I send it back, or take no notice of it?"

"I hardly know what to say, Amy. He is very rude to annoy you in this way. Wait and hear what Tom thinks."

A quarter of an hour later, the planter came up from the beach, and sat down beside the ladies.

"I have a letter from Villari, Marie," he said, "and have brought it up to see what you and Mrs. Marston think of it."

"Amy has also received one, Tom, but would not open it nor send it back till she had your advice. I think it is altogether wrong of him to persecute her in this way."

"Oh, well, you'll be glad to know that he is sorry for what has occurred. Here is his letter to me, Mrs. Marston—please read it."

The letter was a courteously worded and apparently sincere expression of regret for having forced his attentions upon Mrs. Marston, and asking Raymond and his

* *Papalagi* = foreigner.

wife to intercede for him with her. "It will give me the greatest joy if she will overlook my conduct, and accept my sincere apologies, if she does not, I shall carry the remembrance of her just anger to the end of my life. But when I think of her past friendliness to me, I am excited with the hope that her ever-kind heart will perhaps make her forget my unwarrantable presumption, which I look back upon with a feeling of wonder at my being guilty of such temerity." Then he went on to say that Raymond would be interested to learn that he had bought a small schooner of 100 tons called the *Lupetea*, on easy terms of payment, and that he hoped to make a great deal of money by running her in the inter-island trade. "I was only enabled to do this through Mrs. Marston's generosity," he concluded—"the £500 she gave me enabled me to make a good 'deal.' I leave Apia to-morrow for a cruise round Upolu, and as I find that I have some cargo for you, I trust that you, your wife, and Mrs. Marston will at least let me set foot on your threshold once more."

"Well, the poor devil seems very sorry for having offended you so much by his persistence, Mrs. Marston," said the planter with a laugh, "and he writes such a pretty letter that I'm sure you won't withhold your forgiveness."

"I don't think I can. But I must see what he has written to me," and she opened the letter. It contained but a very few lines in the same tenour as that to Raymond, deploring his folly and begging her forgiveness.

"I'm very glad, Tom, that Amy sent him the £500, and that he had the sense not to again refuse it. It

would always be embarrassing to you, Amy, whenever you met him."

"It would indeed. But I doubt if he would have accepted it if it had not been for Mr. Raymond's strongly worded letter on the subject." (The planter had sent the money to him in Apia with a note saying that whatever her feelings were towards him, Mrs. Marston would be additionally aggrieved if he refused to accept a bequest from her late husband; it would, he said, have the result of making the lady feel that his rejection of the gift was uncalled-for and discourteous.)

"So that's all right," said Raymond, as he rose to return to the beach. "I always liked the man, as you have often heard me say. And you really must not be too angry with him, Mrs. Marston. These Italians—like all Latins—are a fearfully idiotic people in some things—especially where women are concerned. Now almost any decent Anglo-Saxon would have taken his gruelling quietly if a woman told him three times that she didn't want him. Frohmann thinks that that crack on the head has touched his brain a bit; and at the same time, you must remember, Mrs. Marston, that whether you like it or not, you won't be able to prevent men from falling in love with you—look at me, for instance!"

Marie Raymond threw a reel of cotton at him—

"Be off to your work!"

## CHAPTER XVI

A FEW days later the *Lupetea* (White Pigeon) ran into the bay and Raymond boarded her. He greeted Villari in a friendly manner, and tried to put him at his ease by at once remarking that the ladies would be very glad to see him again when he had time to come up to the house. The schooner was loaded with a general cargo for the various traders and planters on the south side of the island, and that for Raymond consisted principally of about forty tons of yams for the use of the numerous local labourers already employed on the plantations.

The *Lupetea* was a rather handsome little vessel, well-fitted for the island trade, and carried besides Villari and the mate six hands, all of whom were Europeans, and Raymond at once recognised several of them as old *habitués* of Apia beach—men whose reputation as loafers and boozers of the first water was pretty well known in Samoa. The mate, too, was one of the same sort. He was an old man named Hutton, and was such an incorrigible drunkard that for two years past he had found it increasingly difficult to get employment. He had in his time been mate of

some large ships, but his intemperate habits had caused him to come down to taking a berth as mate or second mate on small coastal schooners whenever he could get the position.

Before he returned to the shore the planter told Villari that he would be glad if he would come to dinner at seven o'clock.

"We are a large party now, Mr. Villari. Besides Mrs. Marston and my wife and myself there are my two partners, Rudd and Meredith, and two white overseers. The latter don't sleep in the house, but they have their meals with us."

Villari accepted the invitation, and at six o'clock landed in his boat and met Raymond and his partners, who had just finished the day's work and were on their way to the house. On the verandah they were received by the ladies, and Mrs. Marston was glad to observe that the Italian took her outstretched hand without any trace of embarrassment, asked if her baby was thriving, and then greeted Mrs. Raymond, who said she was glad to see him looking so well, and wished him prosperity with the *Lupetea*.

The dinner passed off very well. Villari made inquiries as to the whereabouts of the *Esmeralda*, and Mrs. Marston told him all that she knew, and added that if the ship had arrived in Sydney from Valparaiso about eight weeks before, as Frewen had indicated was likely in the last letter received from him, it was quite possible that he would be at Samatau within another ten or fourteen days, and then, as there was no necessity for concealment, she said it was very probable that

the ship's next voyage would be to the Western Pacific to procure labourers for the new plantation.

"You have no intention, I trust, of making the voyage in her, Mrs. Marston?" queried the Italian; "the natives, I hear, are a very treacherous lot."

"No, indeed, Mr. Villari. I am staying here with Mrs. Raymond for quite a long time yet, I hope. It is quite likely, though, that before a year has gone she and I will be going to Sydney and our babies will make the trip with us. I have never been to Australia, and am sure I should enjoy being there if Mrs. Raymond were with me. I have two years' shopping to do."

Rudd—one of Raymond's partners—laughed. "Ah, Mrs. Raymond, why go to Sydney when all of the few other white ladies here are satisfied with Dennis Murphy's 'Imporium' at Apia, where, as he says, 'Yez can get annything ye do be wantin' from a nadle to an anchor, from babies' long clother to pickled cabbage and gunpowder.'"

"Indeed, we are going there this day week," broke in Mrs. Raymond. "There are a lot of things Mrs. Marston and I want, and we mean to turn the 'Emporium' upside down. But we are not entirely selfish, Tom; we are buying new mosquito netting for you, Mr. Rudd, Mr. Meredith, Mr. Young, and Mr. Lorimer." (The two last-named were the overseers.)

"How are you going, Marie?" asked Raymond with a smile; "we can't spare the cutter, and you don't want to be drowned in a *taumualua*."

"Ah! we are not the poor, weak women you think we

are. We are quite independent—we are going to cross overland; and, more than that, we shall be away eight days."

"Clever woman!" retorted Raymond. "It is all very well for you, Marie—you have crossed over on many occasions; but Mrs. Marston does not understand our mountain paths."

"My dear Tom, don't trouble that wise head of yours. *I* have arranged everything. Furthermore, the babies are coming with us! Serena, Olivee, and one of Maliē's girls — and I don't know how many others are to be baby carriers. We go ten miles the first day along the coast, sleep at Falelatai that night; then cross the range to the little bush village at the foot of Tofua Mountain, sleep there, and then go on to Malua in the morning. At Malua we get Harry Revere's boat, and *he* takes us to Apia. Tom, it is a cut-and-dried affair, but now that I've told you of it, I may as well tell you that Maliē has aided and abetted us—the dear old fellow. We shall be treated like princesses at every village all along the route, and I doubt very much if we shall do much walking at all—we shall be carried on *fata*" (cane-work litters).

"All very well, my dear; but you and Maliē have been counting your chickens too soon. Harry Revere is now in our employ, and I yesterday sent a runner to him to go off to Savai'i and buy us a hundred tons of yams; and he has left by now."

"Oh, Tom!" and Mrs. Raymond looked so blankly disappointed that all her guests laughed. "Is there no other way of getting to Apia by water?"

"No, except by *taumualua*—and a pretty nice time you and Mrs. Marston and the suffering infants would have in a native boat! On the other hand you can walk—you are bent on walking—and by going along the coast you can reach Apia in about four days. Give the idea up, Marie, for a month or so, when Maliē and some of his people can take you and Mrs. Marston to Apia in comfort in the cutter."

Villari turned his dark eyes to Mrs. Raymond—

"Will you do me the honour of allowing me to take you and Mrs. Marston to Apia in the *Lupetea*? I shall be delighted."

"It is very kind of you, Captain Villari," said the planter's wife with a smile, as she emphasised the word "captain," "but when will you be sailing?"

The Italian considered a moment.

"I have some cargo for Manono, and some for the German trader at Paulaelae. I shall leave here at daylight to-morrow; be at Manono before noon; run across the straits to Paulaelae the same day, land a few cases of goods for the German, and be back here, if the breeze holds good, the day after to-morrow."

"It is very kind of you, Mr. Villari," said Raymond.

"Not at all, Mr. Raymond. It will be far easier for me to come back this way than to beat up to Apia against the trade wind and strong current on the north side."

"True. I did not think of that. So there you are, Marie—'fixed up,' as Frewen would say. The schooner, I believe, is pretty smart, isn't she, Mr. Villari?"

"Very fair, Mr. Raymond—especially on a wind. We

should get to Apia in less than twenty-four hours if there is any kind of a breeze at all. And for such a small vessel her accommodation is really very good, so the ladies and children will be very comfortable, I hope."

"Yes," said Meredith, "the *Lupetea* is the best schooner in the group. I've made two or three trips in her to Fiji. She was built by Brander, of Tahiti, for a yacht, and he used to carry his family with him on quite long voyages. Took them to Sydney once."

"Well, Captain Villari," said Mrs. Raymond, "we shall be ready for you the day after to-morrow. Be prepared for an infliction," and holding up her left hand, she began counting on her fingers: "Item, two babies; item, mothers of babies aforesaid; item, Serena, nurse girl; item, Olivee, nurse girl; item, one native boy named Lilo, who is a relative of Maliē's, is Mrs. Marston's especial protégé and wants to see the great City of Apia; item, baskets and baskets *and* baskets of roasted fowls, mangoes, pineapples and other things which are for the use of the captain, officers, crew and passengers of the *Lupetea*."

Villari laughed. "There will be plenty of room, Mrs. Raymond."

An hour or so later he bade them all good-night, and went on board.

The old mate was pacing to and fro on the main deck smoking his pipe, and Villari asked him to come below.

He turned up the lamp and told Hutton to sit down.

"Will you have a drink, Hutton?"

"*Will* I? You ought to know me by now."

Villari went to his cabin and brought out a bottle of brandy. His dark eyes were flashing with excitement, as he placed it on the table together with two glasses.

"Drink as much as you like to-night," he said; "but remember we lift anchor at daylight. We must be back here the day after to-morrow. There are passengers coming on board. You remember your promise to me?"

Hutton half-filled his tumbler with brandy, and swallowed it eagerly before answering.

"I do, skipper; I'll do any blessed thing in the world except cuttin' throats. I don't know what your game is, but I'm ready for anythink. If it's a scuttlin' job, you needn't try to show me nothin'. I'm an old hand at the game."

Villari took a little brandy and sipped it slowly.

"It is not anything like that; I am only taking away a woman whom I want to marry. She may give trouble at first. Will you stand by me?"

The man laughed. "Is that all, skipper? Why, I thought it was somethink serious. You can depend on me," and he poured out some more liquor.

"Here's luck to you, Captain. I consider as that fifty pound is in my pocket already."

## CHAPTER XVII

TWO days later the schooner came sweeping round the western point of Samatau Bay and then hove-to abreast of the house. Villari at once went on shore, found his passengers ready to embark, and in half an hour they were all on board and the *Lupetea* was spinning along the southern shore of Upolu at a great rate, for the wind was fresh and the sea very smooth. At midnight she was nearly abreast of a beautiful little harbour called Lotofanga, and Villari, who was on deck, told the mate to haul the head sheets to windward and to lower the boat. This was done so quietly that the only one of the passengers who knew what had been done was the Samoan, Lilo—a bright, intelligent youth of about fifteen years of age. He was lying on the after-deck, and saw the mate and four hands go over the side into the boat, and then a trunk of clothing which belonged to Mrs. Raymond, and which, as the weather was fine, had been left on deck, was passed down. Wondering at this, he rose, and walking to the side, was looking at the boat, when a sailor roughly seized him by the shoulder and ordered him to go for'ard and stay there till he was called. Very unwillingly he obeyed, and then a second man told him

to go below into the foc'sle, and made such a threatening gesture with a belaying-pin, that the boy, now beginning to feel alarmed, at once descended, and immediately the fore scuttle was closed and bolted from the deck. The place was in darkness except for one small slush lamp, and Lilo, taking his seat on a sailor's chest, looked round at the bunks. They were all unoccupied, and this fact increased his fears. He, however, was a courageous lad, and his first thought was to provide himself with some sort of weapon, and by the aid of the lamp he began searching the bunks. In a few minutes he found a sheath knife and belt, which he at once secured, and then again sat down to wait events.

Meanwhile Villari was speaking to the mate.

"You are quite sure you know the landing-place?" he asked.

"Course I do. Didn't I tell you I've been at Lotofanga half a dozen times? It's right abreast of the passage, and no one couldn't miss it on a clear night like this. But it's dead low tide. Why can't I put the woman and girl on the reef, and let 'em walk to the village? Then we don't run no risks of any natives a-seein' us and coming down to the boat."

"Ha! that's a good idea. But is it quite safe? I don't want them to meet with any accident."

"There ain't no danger. The reef is quite flat, with no pools in it, and they needn't even wet their feet. I've walked over it myself."

"Very well then. Now stand by, for I'm going below. As soon as they are in the boat, push off and

hurry all you can and get back. We must be out of sight of land by daylight."

The cabin, which was lighted by a swinging lamp, was very quiet as Villari, first removing his boots, descended softly and bent over the sleeping figures of Olivee and Serena, who were lying on mats spread upon the floor outside the two cabins occupied by their mistresses. He touched Olivee on the shoulder, and awakened her.

"Ask Mrs. Raymond to please dress and come on deck for a few minutes," he said quietly to the girl in English, which she understood. She at once rose, and tapped at her mistress's door, and the Italian returned on deck.

Wondering what could be the reason for such a request, Mrs. Raymond dressed herself as quickly as possible, and was soon on deck followed by the girl Olivee.

"What is the matter, Mr. Villari?" she inquired, and then, as she looked at the man's face, something like fear possessed her. His eyes had the same strange expression that she had often noticed when he was looking at Mrs. Marston, and she remembered what the German doctor had said.

"You must not be alarmed, Mrs. Raymond," he said, "but I am sorry to say that the schooner has begun to leak in an alarming and extraordinary manner, and the pumps are choked. For your own safety I am sending you and Mrs. Marston and your servants on shore. We are now just abreast of Lotofanga, and I am going to try and work the schooner in there and run her ashore on the beach."

Mrs. Raymond, now quite reassured, was at once practical. "We can be ready in a minute, Mr. Villari. I will get little Loisé, and——"

"Do—as quickly as you can—and I will tell Mrs. Marston. I preferred letting you know first. She is very nervous, and it will allay her alarm when she finds that you are so cool. The boat is already alongside. Have you any valuables in your cabin? If so, get them together."

"Nothing but a little money. All my other things are on deck in a trunk."

"That is already in the boat; the mate told me it was yours."

"Hurry up, please, ladies," and the mate's head appeared above the rail.

"Just another minute, Hutton," said Villari, as he, Mrs. Raymond, and the Samoan girl all returned to the cabin together. The latter at once picked up the sleeping Loisé, and her mother, as she wrapped her in a shawl, heard Villari rouse the girl Serena and tell her to awaken her mistress, and presently she heard his voice speaking to Mrs. Marston telling her not to be alarmed, but he feared the schooner might founder at any moment, and that he was sending her and Mrs. Raymond on shore.

"Very well, Mr. Villari," she heard her friend say. "Have you told Mrs. Raymond?"

"Yes," he replied. "She is getting ready now—in fact, she *is* ready." Then he returned to Mrs. Raymond's door, and met her just as she was leaving the cabin with the nurse and child.

"Can I help you, Amy?" asked the planter's wife as she looked into Mrs. Marston's cabin.

"No, dear. I did not quite undress, and I'll be ready in a minute. Baby is fast asleep. Is Loisé awake?"

"No, I'm glad to say. Olivee has her."

"Please come on, Mrs. Raymond," said Villari, somewhat impatiently; "go on, Olivee, with the little girl."

He let them precede him, and almost before she knew it, Mrs. Raymond found herself with the nurse and child in the boat, which was at once pushed off and headed for the shore.

"Stop, stop!" cried the poor lady, clutching the mate by the arm. "Mrs. Marston is coming."

"Can't wait," was the gruff rejoinder, and then, to her horror and indignation, she saw that the boat's crew were pulling as if their lives depended on their exertions.

"Shame, shame!" she cried wildly. "Are you men, to desert them! Oh, if you have any feelings of humanity, turn back," and, rising to her feet, she shouted out at the top of her voice, "Captain Villari, Captain Villari, for God's sake call the boat back!"

But no notice was taken, and a feeling of terror seized her when the brutal Hutton bade her "sit down and take it easy."

As Villari stood watching the disappearing boat Mrs. Marston, followed by the girl Serena carrying her baby, came on deck.

"What is wrong?" she asked anxiously. "Why has the boat gone? What does it mean?" and Villari saw that she was trembling.

"Return to your cabin, Mrs. Marston. No harm

shall come to you. To-morrow morning I shall tell you why I have done this."

A glimmering of the truth came to her, and she tried to speak, but no words came to her lips, as in a dazed manner she took the infant from Serena, and pressing it tightly to her bosom stepped back from him with horror, contempt, and blazing anger shining from her beautiful eyes.

"Go below, I beg you," said Villari huskily. "Here, girl, take this, and give it to your mistress when you go below," and he placed a loaded Colt's pistol in the girl's hand. "No one shall enter the cabin till to-morrow morning. You can shoot the first man who puts his foot on the companion stairs."

## CHAPTER XVIII

A HOT, blazing, and windless day, so hot that the branches of the coco-palms, which at early morn had swished and merrily swayed to the trade wind, now hung limp and motionless, as if they had suffered from a long tropical drought instead of merely a few hours' cessation of the brave, cool breeze, which for nine months out of twelve for ever made symphony in their plumèd crests.

On the shady verandah of a small but well-built native house Amy Marston was seated talking to an old, snowy-haired white man, whose bright but wrinkled face was tanned to the colour of dark leather by fifty years of constant exposure to a South Sea sun.

"Don't you worry, ma'am. A ship is bound to come along here some time or another, an' you mustn't repine, but trust to God's will."

"Indeed I try hard not to repine, Mr. Manning. When I think of all that has happened since that night, seven months ago, I have much for which to thank God. I am alive and well, my child has been spared to me, and in you, on this lonely island, I have found a good, kind friend, to whom I shall be ever grateful."

"That's the right way to look at it, ma'am. Until you came here I had not seen a white woman for nigh on twenty years, and when I did first see you I was all a-trembling—fearing to speak—for you looked to me as if you were an angel, instead of——"

"Instead of being just what I was—a wretched, half-mad creature, whom your kindness and care brought back to life and reason."

The old man, who even as he sat leant upon a stick, pointed towards the setting sun, whose rays were shedding a golden light upon the sleeping sea.

"Whenever I see a thing like that, Mrs. Marston, I feel in my heart, deep, deep down, that God is with us, and that I, Jim Manning, the old broken-down, poverty-stricken trader of Anouda, has as much share in His goodness and blessed love as the Pope o' Rome or the Archbishop o' Canterbury. See how He has preserved you, and directed that schooner to drift here to Anouda, instead of her going ashore on one of the Solomon Islands, where you and all with you would have been killed by savage cannibals and never been heard of again."

Amy Marston left her seat, came over to the old man, and kneeling beside him, placed her hands on his.

"Mr. Manning, whenever a ship does come, will you and your sons come away with me to Samoa, and live with me and the kind friends of whom I have told you. Ah, you have been so good to me and my baby that I would feel very unhappy if, when a ship comes and I leave Anouda, you were to stay behind. I am what is considered a fairly rich woman——"

"God bless you, my child—for you are only a child, although you are a widow and have a baby—but you must not tempt me. I shall never leave Anouda. I have lived here for five-and-thirty years, and shall die here. I am now past seventy-six years of age, and every evening when the sun is setting, as it is setting now, I sit in front of my little house and watch it as I smoke my pipe, and feel more and more content and nearer to God. Now, Mrs. Marston, I must be going home. Where is Lilo?"

"Out on the reef somewhere, fishing. Serena and the baby are in the breadfruit grove behind the village. I sent them there, as it is cooler than the house. I shall walk over there for them before it becomes too dark. Ah, here comes the breeze at last."

"Lilo is a good boy, a good boy," said the old man as he rose and held out his hand; "he is very proud of calling himself your *tausea*,* and that he 'sailed' the *Lupetea* so many hundreds of miles."

"He is indeed a good boy. I do not think we should ever have reached land had it not been for him."

As the bent figure of the old trader disappeared along the path that led to his own house, which was half a mile away, Mrs. Marston reseated herself, and with her sunbrowned hands folded in her lap, gazed dreamily out upon the glassy ocean, and gave herself up to reverie.

* * * * *

When, in an agony of fear, she had obeyed Villari's request to go below, she had locked herself in her own cabin, and after putting her infant to sleep, had sat up

* Protector.

with the girl Serena, waiting for the morning. The pistol which the Italian had given her she laid upon the little table, and Serena, who knew of Villari's infatuation for her mistress, sat beside her with a knife in her hand.

"I cannot shoot with the little gun which hath six shots, lady," said the girl, "but I can drive this knife into his heart."

Half an hour passed without their being disturbed, and then they heard Villari call out to let draw the head sheets, and in a few minutes the schooner was running before a sharp rain squall from the northward. As they sat listening to the spattering of the rain on the deck above, one of the skylight flaps was lifted, and, to their joy, their names were called by the boy Lilo.

"Serena, Ami! 'Tis I, Lilo. Do not shoot at me," he cried, and at the same moment Villari came to the skylight and said—

"The boy wants to stay below with you, Mrs. Marston. I did not know he was on board till a little while ago." Then the flap was lowered, and they saw no more of him till the morning.

The delight of Lilo at finding Mrs. Marston and Serena together was unbounded, and for some minutes the boy was so overjoyed at seeing them again, that even Mrs. Marston, terrified and agitated as she was at Villari's conduct, had to smile when he took her feet in his hands and pressed them to his cheek. As soon as his excitement subsided, he told them of what had occurred after he had been put down into the foc'sle.

About a quarter of an hour after the boat had gone,

the scuttle was opened, and one of the sailors who were left on board told him to come up on deck. Villari was at the wheel, and was in a very bad temper, for he angrily demanded of the two seamen what they meant by keeping him on board, instead of sending him on shore in the boat. One of the men, who was called "Bucky" and who had evidently been drinking, made Villari a saucy answer, and said that he had kept the boy below with a view to making him useful. The mate, he said, "knew all about it," and Villari had better "keep quiet." In another moment Villari knocked him senseless with a belaying pin, and then, ordering the other man to let draw the head sheets, put the helm hard up, and the schooner stood away from the land, just as a rain squall came away from the northward. As soon as Bucky became conscious, Villari spoke to him and the other seaman, cautioned them against disobedience, and said that if they did their duty, he would divide a hundred pounds between them when the schooner reached Noumea in New Caledonia. The men then asked him whether he meant to leave the mate and the other four hands behind?

"Yes, I do," he replied, "that is why I am giving you fifty pounds each. But if you try on any nonsense with me, I'll shoot you both. Now go for'ard and stand by to hoist the squaresail as soon as the squall dies away—this boy will lend a hand."

As soon as the squaresail was set, Villari told Lilo to call down the skylight to Mrs. Marston.

"He told me," concluded the boy, "that although I shall have to cook for every one on board, I was to be

your servant, and that I was to always sleep in the cabin. And he himself is going to sleep in the deck house behind the galley, for I saw that he has a lamp in there, and all his things, and he asked me to bring him some writing paper, and ink, and pens. Where shall I get them?"

Mrs. Marston found the articles for him, and Lilo at once took them to Villari, who was at the wheel.

"Put them in the deck-house," he said, "and tell one of the men to come aft and take the wheel. Then go below again and remain there. If any one puts foot in the cabin, you can shoot him with the pistol I gave to Serena."

"Ami," said the boy anxiously, when he returned, "he is *vale* (mad), for his eyes are the eyes of one who is mad. The land is now far astern, and the ship is speeding fast away from it. What doth this mean?"

"I cannot tell thee, Lilo," she replied, speaking in Samoan, "but as thou sayest, he is mad. Let us trust in God to protect us."

She rose and went into the main cabin, and looked at the tell-tale compass, which swung over the table, and saw that the schooner was heading south-west, which would be the course for New Caledonia.

All that night the *Lupetea* swept steadily and swiftly along over a smooth sea, and then at daylight, Mrs. Marston, who had fallen asleep, was aroused by a loud cry of alarm from Lilo.

She sprang from her berth, and saw that the boy was kneeling beside Villari, who was lying dead at the foot of the companion, with a pistol in his hand.

"He hath killed himself, Ami," said the boy. "As I sat here watching, I heard two shots on deck, and then the ship came to the wind, and as I was about to go on deck, Villari came down, and standing there, put the pistol to his head and killed himself."

"Come on deck," she cried, "and see what has become of the men."

Her fears that Villari had killed the two seamen were verified—they were both lying dead, one beside the wheel, and the other on the main deck. In the deckhouse was a wildly-incoherent and unfinished letter, to her containing expressions of the most passionate devotion, and begging her to pray for his soul.

The first thing to be done was to consider how to dispose of the bodies of poor Villari and the unfortunate seamen. The land was now fifty miles distant, and Lilo, pointing to the eastern horizon, assured Mrs. Marston that bad weather was coming on, and that sail should be taken in as quickly as possible.

"Let Serena and I cast the dead men overboard," he said; "'tis better than that we should keep them on board, for we know not how long it may be ere we get to land again."

Mrs. Marston shuddered.

"As you will, Lilo. When it is done, I will come on deck again and help with the sails."

An hour later the schooner was racing under close-reefed canvas before a half-gale from the eastward.

"Let us steer to the westward," Lilo had said to his mistress. "We cannot beat back to Samoa against such a wind as this, which may last many days. And straight

to the west lieth Uea, on which live some white men who will succour us."

There was no general chart on board, but Mrs. Marston knew that Uea (Wallis Island) was due west from Samoa, and distant about two or three hundred miles.

For twelve hours the *Lupetea* ran swiftly before a rapidly increasing sea, and by night time Lilo was so exhausted in trying to keep her from broaching to, that Serena came to his assistance. Neither he nor Mrs. Marston knew how to heave-to the vessel; but, fearful of running past Wallis Island in the night, they did the very thing they should not have done—lowered and made fast both mainsail and foresail, and let the vessel drive under bare poles.

Worn out with his exertions, Lilo still stuck manfully to his steering, when, looking behind him, he saw a black, towering sea sweeping down upon the schooner. Uttering a cry of alarm, he let go the wheel, and darted into the cabin after Mrs. Marston, who had just left the deck.

Then came a tremendous crash, and the *Lupetea* shook and quivered in every timber, as the mighty avalanche of water fell upon and buried her; smashing the wheel to splinters, snapping off the rudder head, and sweeping the deck clean of everything movable.

A month later the vessel drifted ashore on Anouda Island, just as Mrs. Marston was beginning to despair.

## CHAPTER XIX

DARKNESS had fallen upon the little island, as with the girl Serena and her infant charge, Mrs. Marston was walking back to the house. Lilo had not yet returned, but as they emerged from the breadfruit grove, they heard the sound of many voices, and then came a cry that made their hearts thrill—

"*Te vaka nui! Te vaka nui!*" ("A ship! a ship!") and almost at the same moment Lilo and a score of natives came rushing along the path in search of the white lady.

"A ship! a ship!" shouted Lilo, who was almost frantic with excitement, "your ship—your own ship! The ship that came to Samatau!"

"How know you, Lilo?" cried Mrs. Marston tremblingly. "How can you tell it is my ship? And where is it?"

As soon as the boy was able to make himself heard through the clamour of his companions, he told Mrs. Marston that whilst he was engaged in fishing along the shore of an unfrequented little bay on the north end of the island, he was startled by the sudden appearance of a large ship, which he instantly recognised as the *Esmeralda*. She came around a headland with a

number of her hands aloft taking in sail, and dropped anchor about half a mile from the land. Lilo waited some time to see if a boat would come on shore, and also ran out to the edge of the reef, and tried to attract the attention of the people on board, but no notice was taken of him. Then, as darkness was coming on, he set off for the village at a run to tell his mistress.

"We must hasten on board, Lilo," said Mrs. Marston, as she walked hurriedly along beside him to the house. "Run quickly to the old white man, and ask him to send his boat here for me."

But Manning had already heard the news, and his boat had not only been launched, but, manned by half a dozen stalwart Anoudans, was at that moment coming down inside the reef. The old trader's half-caste son Joe was steering, and the moment the boat touched the beach, he sprang out and ran up to the house.

"Father sent me for you, Mrs. Marston. The old man is nearly off his head with excitement. He has sent a native out on the reef to burn a blue light so that it can be seen by the people on board the ship, who will then know that there are white people here."

"Thank you, Joe," she said, as, kissing her little Marie, and bidding Serena take her to Manning's house, and there await her return from the ship, she ran swiftly to the boat, which at once pushed off, accompanied by twenty or thirty canoes—all crowded with natives.

"Look!" cried Joe Manning, "there is the blue light!"

Half a mile away, on a projecting horn of the reef, the blue flame was shedding its brilliant light, and clearly

revealing the all but nude figure of the man who held it.

"Father said, Mrs. Marston, when he took those three blue lights ashore from the wreck of the *Lupetea*, that they might come in useful some night——" and then he uttered a yell of delight as a great rocket shot high up in air and burst; the ship had seen the blue light and was answering it!

"Hurrah! she sees the blue light!" he cried, and then with voice and gesture he urged his crew to greater exertions. They responded with a will, and then, as a second rocket shot upward, a deep "*Aue!*" of admiration was chorussed forth by the occupants of the canoes, which were trying hard to keep pace with the swift whale-boat.

"We'll see her as soon as we get round the north end, ma'am," said the half-caste, as he swung the boat's head towards a passage through the surrounding reef. Mrs. Marston made no reply; she was too excited to speak, as with parted lips and eager eyes she sat gazing straight ahead.

Ten minutes passed, and only the *swish, swish* of the canoe paddles and the boat's oars broke the silence; then the high north point of the island was rounded, and the *Esmeralda* lay before them, so close, that even though it was dark, figures could be seen moving about her decks, which were well lit up.

Bidding his men cease pulling, and the natives in the canoes to keep silent for a moment, the burly half-caste hailed.

"Ship ahoy!"

"Hallo, there!" cried Frewen's well-remembered voice, "we see you. Come round on the port side."

"Ay, ay, sir," shouted Manning, and then, unable to restrain himself, he expanded his mighty chest and bawled out—

"MRS. MARSTON IS HERE!"

In a moment or two there came an outburst of cheering from the ship, and then amidst the shouts and yells of the Anouda natives the boat dashed alongside, and Mrs. Marston ascended the ladder. A crowd of men were at the gangway, and almost ere her foot had touched the deck Frewen had grasped her hand.

"Thank God, we have found you at last, Mrs. Marston!"

She tried to speak, and then would have fallen, had not Randall Cheyne sprung forward and caught her.

"Carry her to the cabin, Randall," said Frewen, "the poor little woman has fainted."

Half an hour later, the chief officer ran up on the poop-deck and called out—

"All hands aft!"

As the crew—who had been eagerly listening to Joe Manning's account of how Mrs. Marston had come to the island—crowded aft, the mate cried out—

"Boys, I want volunteers to man the starboard quarter-boat to bring Mrs. Marston's baby on board."

Such a wild rush was made for the boat falls that the good-natured officer had to interfere and pick out eight men, and with Lilo as pilot and himself in charge, the boat left the ship amid further cheering.

In the cabin Mrs. Marston, now looking bright and happy, was telling her story to Frewen and Cheyne.

"And now," she said, as she concluded, "I am the very happiest woman in all the world, and oh! Captain Frewen, when I think I shall see Mrs. Raymond within a few days, I feel almost hysterical. I'm sure I won't want to go to sleep for a week."

Frewen laughed as he looked at the flushed, beautiful face. "Well, I don't think you'll get too much sleep to-night, for the men are as much excited as any one aft, and I sent word that they can have a bit of fun and make as much noise as they like until eight bells, and drink your and your baby's health seven times."

"Ah! my poor little baby. How cruel of me to forget her! Oh, please let me go for her."

"You are too late," said Frewen with a smile, "the mate has just gone, and he'll bring her to you before another hour has passed. He has taken your boy Lilo with him as pilot."

Mrs. Marston sighed contentedly, and then looked round at the familiar cabin.

"Oh, how I shall love to see Samatau again, Captain Frewen, and oh! how wonderful it is that the *Esmeralda* of all ships should be the one to find me. If only Mrs. Raymond could know I was safe and on board talking to you of her!"

"She will indeed be very happy; and yet, do you know, Mrs. Marston, that she always said you were not dead, although when month after month passed by, and a most careful search had been made of all the islands within a radius of six hundred miles, and no

trace of the *Lupetea* was found, Mr. Raymond himself lost all hope."

"How long was it before Mr. Raymond knew of what had occurred on board that night off Lotofanga?" she asked.

"Mrs. Raymond herself told him on the following afternoon, when, to his astonishment, she arrived at Samatau in a native boat. It seems that after Hutton landed them—she, little Loisé, and Olivee—on the reef, they were met by a party of natives who were returning from a fishing excursion. These people at once took them to the village, where, of course, they were very kindly treated.

"Mrs. Raymond, who was half mad with anxiety for you, asked the chief to provide her with a boat to return to Samatau and tell her husband of what had happened. They left after an hour's rest and almost foundered in the same squall which overtook the *Lupetea*. However, they reached Samatau a little before sunset. Raymond at once sent Meredith and Rudd to Apia to charter two or even three local schooners to sail in search of the *Lupetea*, and for over a month whilst I was there a most unremitting search was kept up, and letters were sent all over the Pacific asking the traders at the various islands to keep a good look-out either for the schooner or any wreckage which might come ashore.

"I arrived at Samatau in the *Esmeralda* about a fortnight after Villari left there, and found Mrs. Raymond alone and distracted with fear for your safety. During the following week, one of the schooners which were out searching for you returned. Raymond was on

board. He had been searching through the windward islands of the Fiji Group, but without of course finding a trace of the missing vessel. On the way back, though, they spoke a Tahitian barque, whose captain told them that the bodies of Hutton and the four men who were with him had been found on the reef at Savai'i a few days after the scoundrels had put Mrs. Raymond ashore at Lotofanga. The boat had evidently been driven ashore during the stormy weather which prevailed for three or four days afterwards.

"After remaining ashore for a day only, Raymond again sailed—this time to make a search among the Friendly Islands; and I, with Mr. Rudd and Overseer Lorimer to assist me, sailed for the Solomon Group. We decided, instead of proceeding direct to the Solomons for our cargo of black humanity, to first cruise through the New Hebrides Group, in the hope we might learn something of the *Lupetea*."

"It makes me feel as if I were a real missing princess, Captain Frewen."

"So you were—until to-night. Well, from the New Hebrides we went north to the Solomons, where we were singularly fortunate in getting five hundred natives in a few weeks without any trouble. I landed them at Samatau without losing a single man, and they are now working on the new plantation as happy as sandboys.

"Raymond was at home when I returned, but there was still one vessel away looking for you—the cutter *Alrema and Niya*—and in fact we long since decided not to entirely abandon the search for a full year.

"I left on a second trip for the Solomons just nine days ago, and we sighted this island early this morning. I did not think that we should hear anything of the *Lupetea* so far to the westward—over a thousand miles from Samoa—but as three of our coloured crew are down with fever, I decided to anchor, leave them here in care of the natives, and also find out if any wreckage had been seen. We could not see any signs of houses on this side of the island, but did see a man making gestures to the ship from the reef; however, as I did not intend to go ashore until the morning, we did not lower a boat. You can imagine our surprise when the glare of a blue light was seen."

"Mate's boat is alongside, sir," announced the bos'un.

And in a few minutes the smiling Serena entered the cabin and placed little Marie in her mother's arms.

* * * * *

Shortly after dawn the merry click of the windlass pawls told Mrs. Marston that the *Esmeralda* was getting underweigh again for Samoa—for the projected voyage to the Solomon Islands was of course abandoned. Old Manning and his stalwart sons came off to say goodbye, and at Mrs. Marston's earnest request the trader consented to accept from her some hundreds of pounds' worth of trade goods from the well-filled storeroom of the *Esmeralda*.

"Goodbye, Mrs. Marston, and God bless you and the little one, and give you all a safe passage to Samoa," he cried, as he descended the side into his boat.

For many hours she remained on deck watching the green little island as it sunk astern, and thinking of the

kindly-hearted old trader who had so cheered her by his simple piety and unobtrusive goodness. Then her thoughts turned joyfully to home—for the Raymonds' house was home to her—and she sighed contentedly as the gallant *Esmeralda*, with every stitch of canvas that could be set, slipped gracefully over the blue Pacific on an east-south-east course, for it was the month of November, and light westerly winds had set in.

Two weeks on such a happy ship soon passed away, and then early one morning the grey dome of Mount Tofua stood out from the mantle of mist which hid its verdant sides; and ere the sun had dried the heavy night dews on the gaily-coloured crotons and waving pampas grass which grew just above the beach, the brave ship dropped anchor once more in Samatau Bay amidst a scene of the wildest confusion. For Raymond, as he had stood on the verandah with his wife, watching her sailing in, and wondering what had brought back Frewen so soon, saw this signal flying from her spanker gaff.

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"What does it mean, Tom?"

"*Found. All well!*" he shouted, and pitching his telescope clean over the tops of the wild orange-tree in

front of the house, he rushed down to the beach, crying out the news as he ran.

Boats, canoes, and *taumualuas* by the score, all crowded with natives, who were shouting themselves hoarse, paddled furiously off to the ship; and ere her cable rattled through the hawse-pipe and the heavy anchor plunged down to its coral bed, her decks were filled with people, and Raymond, followed by the old chief Maliē, was shaking hands warmly with "the missing princess" and her rescuer.

* * * * *

It is night at Samatau, and the two ladies are sitting on the verandah. The house is very quiet.

"Amy?"

"Yes, Marie, dear."

"Tom was asking me this morning if you have yet made up your mind to go on building that house."

"Oh, dear, Marie. I have hardly given it a thought since I came back—and I've only been back a week!"

"Amy?"

"Marie?"

"I suppose, dear, that Captain Frewen won't give up the *Esmeralda* altogether when he goes to America to see his people. He will come back, will he not?"

Mrs. Marston blushed. "I—I think so, dear. Come inside, and I'll tell you."

## *A MEMORY OF THE SOUTHERN SEAS*

IN other works by the present writer frequent allusion has been made, either by the author or by other persons, to Captain Hayes. Perhaps the continuous appearance of his name may have been irritating to many of my readers; if so I can only plead that it is almost impossible when writing of wild life in the Southern Seas to avoid mentioning him. Every one who sailed the Austral seas between the "fifties" and "seventies," and thousands who had not, knew of him and had heard tales of him. In some cases these tales were to his credit; mostly they were not. However, the writer makes no further apology for reproducing the following sketch of the great "Bully" which he contributed to the *Pall Mall Gazette*, and which, by the courtesy of the editor of that journal, he is able to include in this volume.

In a most interesting, though all too brief, sketch of the life of the late Rev. James Chalmers, the famous New Guinea missionary, which appeared in the January number of a popular religious magazine, the author, the Rev. Richard Lovett, gives us a brief glance of the

notorious Captain "Bully" Hayes. Mr. Chalmers, in 1866, sailed for the South Seas with his wife in the missionary ship *John Williams*—the second vessel of that name, the present beautiful steamer being the fourth *John Williams*.

The second *John Williams* had but a brief existence, for on her first voyage she was wrecked on Niué Island (the "Savage" Island of Captain Cook). Hayes happened to be there with his vessel, and agreed to convey the shipwrecked missionaries to Samoa. No doubt he charged them a pretty stiff price, for he always said that missionaries "were teaching Kanakas the degrading doctrine that even if a man killed his enemy and cut out and ate his heart in public, and otherwise misconducted himself, he could yet secure a front seat in the Kingdom of Heaven if he said he was sorry and was then baptized as Aperamo (Abraham) or Iakopo (Jacob)."

"It is characteristic of Chalmers," writes Mr. Lovett, "that he was able to exert considerable influence over this ruffian, and even saw good points in him, not easily evident to others."

The present writer sailed with Hayes on four voyages as supercargo, and was with the big-bearded, heavy-handed, and alleged "terror of the South Seas" when his famous brig *Leonora* was wrecked on Strong's Island, one wild night in March, 1875. And he has nothing but kindly memories of a much-maligned man, who, with all his faults, was never the cold-blooded murderer whose fictitious atrocities once formed the theme of a highly blood-curdling melodrama staged in

the old Victoria Theatre, in Pitt Street, Sydney, under the title of "The Pirate of the Pacific." In this lively production of dramatic genius Hayes was portrayed as something worse than Blackbeard or Llonois, and committed more murders and abductions of beautiful women in two hours than ever fell to the luck in real life of the most gorgeous pirate on record. No one of the audience was more interested or applauded more vigorously the villain's downfall than "Bully" Hayes himself, who was seated in a private box with a lady. He had come to Sydney by steamer from Melbourne, where he had left his ship in the hands of brokers for sale, and almost the first thing he saw on arrival were the theatrical posters concerning himself and his career of crime.

"I would have gone for the theatre people," he told the writer, "if they had had any money, but the man who 'played' me was the lessee of the theatre and was hard up. I think his name was Hoskins. He was a big fat fellow, with a soapy, slithery kind of a voice, and I lent him ten pounds, which he spent on a dinner to myself and some of his company. I guess we had a real good time."

But let us hear what poor ill-fated Missionary Chalmers has to say about the alleged pirate:—

"Hayes seemed to take to me during the frequent meetings we had on shore" (this was when the shipwrecked missionaries and their wives were living on Savage Island), "and before going on board for good I met him one afternoon and said to him, 'Captain Hayes, I hope you will have no objection to our having morning and evening service on board, and twice on

Sabbaths. All short, and only those who like need attend.' 'Certainly not. My ship is a missionary ship now' (humorous dog), 'and I hope you will feel it so. All on board will attend these services.' I replied, 'Only if they are inclined.'" (If they had shirked it, the redoubtable "Bully" would have made attendance compulsory with a belaying pin.)

"Hayes was a perfect host and a thorough gentleman. His wife and children were on board. We had fearful weather all the time, yet I must say we enjoyed ourselves. . . . We had gone so far south that we could easily fetch Tahiti, and so we stood for it, causing us to be much longer on board. Hayes several times lost his temper and did very queer things, acting now and then more like a madman than a sane man. Much of his past life he related to us at table, especially of things (he did) to cheat Governments."

Poor "Bully!" He certainly did like to "cheat Governments," although he despised cheating private individuals—unless it was for a large amount. And he frequently "lost his temper" also; and when that occurred things were very uncomfortable for the man or men who caused it. On one occasion, during an electrical storm off New Guinea, a number of corposants appeared on the yards of his vessel, which was manned by Polynesians and some Portuguese. One of the latter was so terrified at the ghastly *corpo santo* that he fell on his knees and held a small leaden crucifix, which he wore on his neck, to his lips. His example was quickly followed by the rest of his countrymen; which so enraged Hayes that, seizing the first offender, he tore

the crucifix from his hand, and, rolling it into a lump, thrust it into his mouth *and made him swallow it.*

"You'll kill the man, sir," cried Hussey, his American mate, who, being a good Catholic, was horrified.

Hayes laughed savagely: "If that bit of lead is good externally it ought to be a darned sight better when taken internally."

He was a humorous man at times, even when he was cross. And he was one of the best sailor-men that ever trod a deck. A chronometer watch, which was committed to the care of the writer by Hayes, bore this inscription:—

"From Isaac Steuart, of New York, to Captain William Henry Hayes, of Cleveland, Ohio. A gift of esteem and respect for his bravery in saving the lives of seventeen persons at the risk of his own. Honor to the brave."

Hayes told me that story—modestly and simply as brave men only tell a tale of their own dauntless daring. And he told me other stories as well of his strange, wild career; of Gordon of Khartoum, whom he had known, and of Ward and Burgevine and the Taeping leaders; and how Burgevine and he quarrelled over a love affair and stood face to face, pistols in hand, when Ward sprang in between them and said that the woman was his, and that they were fools to fight over what belonged to neither of them and what he would gladly be rid of himself.

Peace to his *manes!* He died—in his sea-boots—from a blow on his big, bald head, superinduced by his attention to a lady who was "no better than she ought to have been," even for the islands of the North Pacific.

# *SOME SOUTH SEA NOTES*

## THE "WHALE CURE"

I ONCE heard a man who for nearly six years had been a martyr to rheumatism say he would give a thousand pounds to have a cure effected.

"I wish, then, that we were in Australia or New Zealand during the shore whaling season," remarked a friend of the writer; "I should feel pretty certain of annexing that thousand pounds." And then he described the whale cure.

The "cure" is not fiction. It is a fact, so the whalemen assert, and there are many people at the township of Eden, Twofold Bay, New South Wales, who, it is vouched, can tell of several cases of chronic rheumatism that have been absolutely perfectly cured by the treatment herewith briefly described. How it came to be discovered I do not know, but it has been known to American whalemen for years.

When a whale is killed and towed ashore (it does not matter whether it is a "right," humpback, finback, or sperm whale) and while the interior of the carcase still

retains a little warmth, a hole is cut through one side of the body sufficiently large to admit the patient, the lower part of whose body from the feet to the waist should sink in the whale's intestines, leaving the head, of course, outside the aperture. The latter is closed up as closely as possible, otherwise the patient would not be able to breathe through the volume of ammoniacal gases which would escape from every opening left uncovered. It is these gases, which are of an overpowering and atrocious odour, that bring about the cure, so the whalemen say. Sometimes the patient cannot stand this horrible bath for more than an hour, and has to be lifted out in a fainting condition, to undergo a second, third, or perhaps fourth course on that or the following day. Twenty or thirty hours, it is said, will effect a radical cure in the most severe cases, provided there is no malformation or distortion of the joints, and even in such cases the treatment causes very great relief. One man who was put in up to his neck in the carcass of a small "humpback" stood it for sixteen hours, being taken out at two-hour intervals. He went off declaring himself to be cured. A year later he had a return of the complaint and underwent the treatment a second time.

All the "shore" whalemen whom the writer has met thoroughly believe in the efficacy of the remedy, and by way of practical proof assert that no man who works at cutting-in and trying out a whale ever suffers from rheumatism. Furthermore, however, some of them maintain that the "deader" the whale is, the better the remedy. "More gas in him," they say. And

any one who has been within a mile of a week-dead whale will believe *that*.

Anyway, if there is any person, rheumatic or otherwise, who wants to emulate Jonah's adventure in a safe manner (with a dead whale), let him write to the Davidson Brothers, Ben Boyd Point, Twofold Bay, N.S.W., or to the Messrs. Christian, Norfolk Island, and I am sure those valorous whalemen would help him to achieve his desire.

* * * * *

## THE SEA "SALMON" SEASON IN AUSTRALIA

The sea salmon make their appearance on the southern half of the eastern seaboard of Australia with undeviating regularity in the last week of October, and, entering the rivers and inlets, remain on the coast till the first week of December. As far as my knowledge goes, they come from the south and travel northwards, and do not appear to relish the tropical waters of the North Queensland coast, though I have heard that some years ago a vast "school" entered the waters of Port Denison.

Given a clear, sunny day and a smooth sea the advent of these fish to the bar harbours and rivers of New South Wales presents a truly extraordinary sight. From any moderately high bluff or headland one can discern their approach nearly two miles away. You see a dark patch upon the water, and were it not for the attendant flocks of gulls and other aquatic birds, one would imagine it to be but the passing reflection of a

cloud. But presently you see another and another; and, still further out, a long black line flecked with white can be discerned with a good glass. Then you look above—the sky is cloudless blue, and you know that the dark moving patches are the advance battalions of countless thousands of sea salmon, and that the mile-long black and white streak behind them is the main body of the first mighty army; for others are to follow day by day for another fortnight.

Probably the look-out man at the pilot station is the first to see them, and in a few minutes the lazy little seaport town awakes from its morning lethargy, and even the butcher, and baker, and bootmaker, and bank manager, and other commercial magnates shut up shop and walk to the pilot station to watch the salmon "take" the bar, whilst the entire public school rushes home to prepare its rude tackle for the onslaught that will begin at dark.

The bar is a mile wide or more, and though there is but little surf, the ebbing tide, running at five knots, makes a great commotion, and the shallow water is thick with yellow sand swept seaward to the pale green beyond. Presently the first "school" of salmon reaches the protecting reef on the southern side—and then it stops. The fish well know that such a current as that cannot be stemmed, and wait, moving slowly to and fro, the dark blue compactness of their serried masses ever and anon broken by flashes of silver as some turn on their sides or make an occasional leap clear out of the water to avoid the pressure of their fellows.

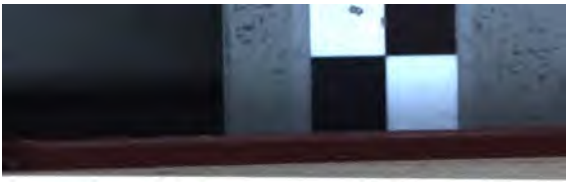
An hour or so passes; then the tumult on the bar

ceases, the incoming seas rise clear and sandless, and the fierce race of the current slows down to a gentle drift; it is slack water, and the fish begin to move. One after another the foremost masses sweep round the horn of the reef and head for the smooth water inside. On the starboard hand a line of yellow sandbank is drying in the sun, and the passage has now narrowed down to a width of fifty yards; in twenty minutes every inch of water, from the rocky headland on the south side of the entrance to where the river makes a sharp turn northward, half a mile away, is packed with a living, moving mass. Behind follows the main body, the two horns of the crescent shape which it had at first preserved now swimming swiftly ahead, and converging towards each other as the entrance to the bar is reached, and the centre falling back with the precision of well-trained troops. And then in a square, solid mass, thirty or forty feet in width, they begin the passage, and for two hours or more the long dark lines of fish pass steadily onward, only thrown into momentary confusion now and then by a heavy swell, which, however, does no more than gently undulate the rearmost lines of fish, and then subsides, overcome by the weight and solidity of the living wall.

Along the beach on the southern side of the river stand a hundred or more yelling urchins, with stout lines fitted with many baitless hooks and weighted with a stone. As the swarming fish press steadily on within ten feet or less of the shore the children fling their lines across, and draw them quickly in. Sometimes two or three fish are "jagged" at once, and as the average weight is 10 lb. the

jagger takes a turn of the line around his waist and struggles up the beach. Even if he has but one fish hooked amidships he has all he can do to drag him out from the countless thousands and land him. It is not an eminently ideal or sportsmanlike sort of fishing, this "jagging," but it possesses a marvellous enjoyment and fascination for the youth of ten, and older people as well; for a full-grown salmon is a powerful fellow, and his big, fluke-like tail enables him to make a terrific rush when under the influence of terror or when chasing his prey.

Once over the bar and into the placid waters of the tidal river, the vanguards of the hundreds of thousands to follow pursue their way steadily up the shallow flats and numberless blind creeks, where they remain till spawning is over. Every day come fresh accessions to their numbers, and at night time strange, indescribable sounds are heard, caused by the movements of the fishes' tails and fins as they swim to and fro, and one section, meeting another, endeavours to force a right-of-way. On the third or fourth evening the sharks and porpoises appear, having followed the "schools" in from the sea, and wreak fearful havoc among them. Sometimes in a deep pool or quiet reach of the river one may see a school of perhaps five or six thousand terrified salmon, wedged one up against the other, unable to move from their very numbers, while half a dozen sharks dash in among them and devour them by the score; and often as the current runs seaward hundreds of half bodies of salmon can be seen going out over the bar. At night time the townspeople appear on the scene in boats with lanterns and spears, and for no other purpose than the





mere love of useless slaughter kill the fish till their arms are exhausted. At places within easy access of Sydney by steamer or rail some few thousands of salmon are sent to market, but as the flesh is somewhat coarse, they are only bought by the poorer members of the community, 4d. and 6d. each being considered a good retail price for a 10 lb. fish. The roes, however, are excellent eating, and some attempt has been made to smoke them on a large scale, but like everything else connected with the fishing industry (or rather want of industry) in New South Wales, has failed. It sometimes happens (as I once witnessed in Trial Bay, on the coast of New South Wales) that heavy weather will set in when the salmon are either passing inwards over the bars or are returning to sea. The destruction that is then wrought among them is terrific. On the occasion of which I speak, every heavy roller that reared and then dashed upon the beach flung upon the sands hundreds of the fish, stunned and bleeding. At one spot where the beach had but a very slight inclination towards the water from the line of scrub above high-water mark there were literally many thousands of salmon, lying three and four deep, and in places piled up in irregular ridges and firmly packed together with sand and seaweed.

* * * * *

## "JACK SHARK"

"WHAT is the greatest number of sharks that you have ever seen together at one time?" asked an English lady in San Francisco of Captain Allen, of the New Bedford barque *Acors Barnes*.

"Two or three hundred when we have been cutting-in a whale; two or three thousand in Christmas Island lagoon."

Some of the hardy old seaman's listeners smiled somewhat incredulously at the "two or three thousand," but nevertheless he was not only not exaggerating, but might have said five or six thousand. The Christmas Island to which he referred must not be mistaken for the island of the same name in the Indian Ocean—the Cocos-Keeling group. It is in the North Pacific, two degrees north of the equator and 157·30 W., and is a low, sandy atoll, encompassing a spacious but rather shallow lagoon, teeming with non-poisonous fish. It is leased from the Colonial Office by a London firm, who are planting the barren soil with coconut trees and fishing the lagoon for pearl-shell. Like many other of the isolated atolls in the North Pacific, such as the Fannings, Palmyra, and Providence Groups, the lagoon is resorted to by sharks in incredible numbers; and even at the present time the native labourers employed by the firm alluded to make a considerable sum of money by catching sharks and drying the fins and tails for export to Sydney, and thence to China, where they command a price ranging from 6d. to 1s. 6d. per pound, according to quality.

The lagoon sharks are of a different species to the short, thick, wide-jawed "man-eaters," although they are equally dangerous at night time as the deep-sea prowlers. The present writer was for a long time engaged with a native crew in the shark-catching industry in the North Pacific, and therefore had every opportunity of studying Jack Shark and his manners.

# SOME SOUTH SEA NOTES

On Providence Lagoon (the Ujilong of the natives), once the secret rendezvous of the notorious Captain "Bully" Hayes and his associate adventurer, Captain Ben Peese, I have, at low tide, stood on the edge of the coral reef on one side of South Passage, and gazed in astonishment at the extraordinary numbers of sharks entering the lagoon for their nightly onslaught on the vast bodies of fish with which the water teems. They came on in droves, like sheep, in scores at first, then in hundreds, and then in packed masses, their sharp, black-tipped fins stretching from one side of the passage to the other. As they gained the inside of the lagoon they branched off, some to right and left, others swimming straight on towards the sandy beaches of the chain of islets. From where I stood I could have killed scores of them with a whale lance, or even a club, for they were packed so closely that they literally scraped against the coral walls of the passage; and some Gilbert Islanders who were with me amused themselves by seizing several by their tails and dragging them out upon the reef. They were nearly all of the same size, about seven feet, with long slender bodies, and their markings, shape, and general appearance were those of the shark called by the Samoans *moemoeao* ("sleeps all day"), though not much more than half their length. The Gilbert Islanders informed me that this species were also *bàkwa matu te ao* (sleepers by day) at certain seasons of the year, but usually sought their prey by night at all times; and a few months later I had an opportunity afforded me of seeing some hundreds of them asleep. This was outside the barrier reef of the little island

of Ailuk, in the Marshall Group. We were endeavouring to find and recover a lost anchor, and were drifting along in a boat in about six fathoms of water; there was not a breath of wind, and consequently we had no need to use water glasses, for even minute objects could be very easily discerned through the crystal water.

"Hallo! look here," said the mate, "we're right on top of a nice little family party of sharks. It's their watch below."

Lying closely together on a bottom of sand and coral *débris* were about a dozen sharks, heads and tails in perfect line. Their skins were a mottled brown and yellow, like the crustacean-feeding "tiger shark" of Port Jackson. They lay so perfectly still that the mate lowered a grapnel right on the back of one. He switched his long, thin tail lazily, "shoved" himself along for a few feet, and settled down again to sleep, his bedmates taking no notice of the intruding grapnel. Further on we came across many more—all in parties of from ten to twenty, and all preserving in their slumber a due sense of regularity of outline in the disposition of their long bodies.

The natives of the low-lying equatorial islands—the Kingsmill, Gilbert, Ellice, and Tokelau or Union Groups—are all expert shark fishermen; but the wild people of Paanopa (Ocean Island) stand *facile princeps*. I have frequently seen four men in a small canoe kill eight or ten sharks (each of which was as long as their frail little craft) within three hours.

# SOME SOUTH SEA NOTES

## SOME PACIFIC ISLANDS FISHES

Of all the food-fishes inhabiting the reefs, lagoons, and tidal waters of the islands of the North and South Pacific, there are none that are prized more than the numerous varieties of sand-mullet. Unlike the same fishes in British and other colder waters, they frequently reach a great size, some of them attaining two feet in length, and weighing up to ten pounds; and another notable feature is the great diversity of colour characterising the whole family. The writer is familiar with at least ten varieties, and the natives gave me the names of several others which, however, are seldom taken in sufficient numbers to make them a common article of diet. The larger kind are caught with hook and line in water ranging from three to five fathoms in depth, the smaller kinds are always to be found in the very shallow waters of the lagoons, where they are taken by nets. At night, by the aid of torches made of dried coconut leaf, the women and children capture them in hundreds as they lie on the clear, sandy bottom. In the picturesque lagoons of the Ellice Group (South Pacific), and especially in that of Nanomea, these fish afford excellent sport with either rod or hand-line, and sport, too, with surroundings of the greatest beauty imaginable; for the little lagoon of Nanomea is perfectly landlocked, except where there are breaks of reef—dry at low water—which is as clear as crystal, and the low-lying belt of land is a verdant girdle of coco and pandanus palms, growing with bread-

fruit and *fetau* trees on the rich, warm soil composed of vegetable matter and decayed coral detritis.

And then, too, you can look over the side of the canoe, or from an exposed boulder of coral, and see the fish take your bait—unless a breeze is rippling the surface of the water.

I usually chose the early morning, before the trade wind roused itself, as then, if in a canoe, one need not anchor, but drift about from one side of the lagoon to the other; then about ten o'clock, when the breeze came, I would paddle over to the lee of the weather side of the island (the land in places not being much wider than the Palisadoes of Port Royal in Jamaica) and fish in unruffled water in some deep pool among a number of sand banks, or rather round-topped hillocks, which even at high water were some feet above the surface.

When bent on sand-mullet—*afulu* the natives call them—I was in the habit of going alone, although the moment I appeared in the village carrying my rod, lines, and gun, I was always besought to take one or two men with me. One of the most ardent fishermen on the island was one Kino — a gentleman who weighed eighteen stone; and, as my canoe was only intended for two light-weights like myself, I always tried to avoid meeting him, for not only was he most persistent in his desire to see how I managed to get so many mullet, but was most anxious to learn to speak English.

On one occasion I fatuously took the monster out in my whaleboat to fish for *takuo* (a variety of *tuna*) one calm starlight night when the ocean was like a sheet of glass. We pulled out over the reef, and when a mile

from the shore lowered our heavy lines and began fishing. For nearly a quarter of an hour neither of us spoke, then he suddenly asked me in his fat, wheezy tones, if I would mind telling him something.

"What is it?"

"Will you tell me, friend, what are the English words that should be spoken by one of us of Nanomea to a ship captain, giving him greeting, and asking him if he hath had a prosperous voyage with fair weather? My heart is sick with envy that Pita and Loli speak English, and I cannot."

Forgetting my past experiences of my man, I was fool enough to tell him.

"You say this: 'Good morning, Captain; have you had a good voyage and fair weather?'"

He greedily repeated each word after me, very slowly and carefully; then he asked me to tell him again. I did so. Then he sighed with pleasure.

"Kind friend, just a few times more," he said.

I told him the sentence over and over again for at least a score of times; and his smooth, fat face beamed when at last he was able to say the words alone. Then he began whispering it. Five minutes passed, and he tackled me again.

"Is this right?—'Good—mornin', kāpen—ha—ad—you—have—goot—foy—age—and—fair wesser?'"

"That is right," I said impatiently, "but ask me no more to-night. Dost not know that it is unlucky to talk when fishing for *takuo* and *tautau*?"

"Dear friend, *that* we believed only in the heathen days. *Now* we are Christians."

He paused a moment, then raised his face to the stars and softly murmured, "Good—mornin' kāpen—haad—you—you—have—goot—foyage—and wesser—and fair—wesser?" Then he looked at me interrogatively. I took no notice.

He toyed with his line and bent an earnest gaze down in the placid depths of the water as if he saw the words down there, then taking a turn of his line round a thwart, he put his two elbows on his enormous naked knees, and resting his broad, terraced chin on the palms of his hands, he said slowly and mournfully, as if he were communing with some one in the spirit-world—

"Good—mornin'—kāpen. Haad—you—haave——" &c., &c.

Then I sharply spoke a few words of English—simple in themselves, but well understood by nearly every native of the South Seas. He looked surprised, and also reproachful, but went on in a whisper so faint that I could scarcely hear it; sometimes quickly and excitedly, sometimes doubtingly and with quivering lips, now raising his eyes to heaven, and with drooping lower jaw gurgling the words in his thick throat; then sighing and muttering them with closed eyes and a rapt expression of countenance, till with a sudden snort of satisfaction, he ceased—at least I thought he had. He took up a young coconut, drank it, and began again as fresh as ever.

"Stop!" I said angrily. "Art thou a grown man or a child? Here is some tobacco, fill thy pipe, and cease muttering like a *tama valea* (idiot boy)."

He shook his head. "Nay, if I smoke, I may forget.

I am very happy to-night, kind friend. 'Good-mor——"

"May Erikobai" (a cannibal god of his youth) "polish his teeth on thy bones!" I cried at last in despair. That shocking heathen curse silenced him, but for the next two hours, whenever I looked at the creature, I saw his lips moving and a silly, fatuous expression on his by no means unintelligent face. I never took him out with me again, although he sent me fowls and other things as bribes to teach him more English.

* * * * *

These sand-mullet are very dainty-feeding fish. They are particularly fond of the soft tail part of the hermit crabs which abound all over the island, especially after rain has fallen. Some of the shells (*T. niloticus*) in which they live are so thick and strong, however, that it requires two heavy stones to crush them sufficiently to take out the crab, the upper part of whose body is useless for bait. For a stick of tobacco, the native children would fill me a quart measure, and perhaps add some few shrimps as well, or half a dozen large sea urchins—a very acceptable bait for mullet. My rod was a slender bamboo—cost a quarter of a dollar, and was unbreakable—and my lines of white American cotton, strong, durable, and especially suitable for fishing on a bottom of pure white sand. My gun was carried on the outrigger platform, within easy reach, for numbers of golden plover frequented the sand banks, feeding on the serried battalions of tiny soldier crabs, and in rainy weather they were very easy to shoot. The

rest of my gear consisted of twenty or thirty cartridges, a box of assorted hooks, a heavy 27-cord line with a 5-in. hook (in case I saw any big rock cod about), a few bottles of lager, some ship biscuits or cold yam, and a tin of beef or sardines, and some salt. This was a day's supply of food, and if I wanted more, there were plenty of young coconuts to be had by climbing for them, and I could cook my own fish, native fashion; lastly there was myself, in very easy attire—print shirt, dungaree pants, panama hat, and no boots, in place of which I used the native *takka*, or sandals of coconut fibre, which are better than boots when walking on coral. Sometimes I would remain away till the following morning, sleeping on the weather side of the island under a shelter of leaves to keep off the dew, and on such occasions two or three of the young men from the village would invariably come and keep me company—and help eat the fish and birds. However, they were very well conducted, and we always spent a pleasant night, rose at daybreak, bathed in the surf, or in the lagoon, and after an early breakfast returned to the village, or had some more fishing. It was a delightful life.

My canoe was so light that it could easily be carried by one person from the open shed where it was kept, and in a few minutes after leaving my house I would be afloat, paddling slowly over the smooth water, and looking over the side for the mullet. In the Nanomea, Nui, and Nukufetau Lagoons the largest but scarcest variety are of a purple-grey, with fins (dorsal and abdominal) and mouth and gill-plates tipped with yellow; others

again are purple-grey with dull reddish markings. This kind, with those of an all bright yellow colour throughout, are the most valued, though, as I have said, the whole family are prized for their delicacy of flavour.

As soon as I caught sight of one or more of the sought-for fish, I would cease paddling, and bait my hook; and first carefully looking to see if there were any predatory leather-jackets or many-coloured wrasse in sight, would lower away, the hook soon touching the bottom, as I always used a small sinker of coral stone. This was necessary only because of the number of other fish about—bass, trevally, and greedy sea-pike, with teeth like needles and as hungry as sharks. In the vicinity of the reef, or about the isolated coral boulders, or "mushrooms" as we called them, these fish were a great annoyance to me, though my native friends liked them well enough, especially the large, gorgeously-hued "leather-jackets," to which they have given the very appropriate name of *isuumu moana*—the sea-rat—for they have a great trick of quietly biting a baited line a few inches above the hook. *Apropos* of the "sea-rat," I may mention that their four closely-set and human-like teeth are so thick that they will often crush an ordinary hook as if it were made of glass, and as their mouths are exceedingly small, and many are heavy, powerful fishes, they cause havoc with ordinary tackle. But a fellow-trader and myself devised a very short, stout hook (1½ inch of shank) with a barbless curve well turned in towards the shank; these we bent on to a length of fine steel wire seizing. They proved just the ideal hook for the larger kind of sea-rat, which run up

to 10 lb., and the natives were so greatly taken with the device that, whenever a ship touched at the island, short pieces of fine steel wire rigging were eagerly bought (or begged for).

However, no leather-jackets, wrasse, greedy rock-cod, or keen-eyed trevally being about, the bait touches the sandy bottom, and then you will see one—perhaps half a dozen—*afulu* cease poking their noses in the sand, and make for it steadily but cautiously. When within a foot or so, they invariably stop dead, and eye the bait to see if it is worth eating. But they are soon satisfied —that round, pale green thing with delicious juices exuding from it is an *uga* (hermit crab) and must not be left to be devoured by rude, big-mouthed rock-cod or the like, and in another moment or two your line is tautened out, and a purple-scaled beauty is fighting gamely for his life in the translucent waters of the lagoon, followed half-way to the surface by his companions, whom, later on, you place beside him in the bottom of the canoe. And even to look at them is a joy, for they are graceful in shape, lovely in colour, and each scale is a jewel.

You take up the paddle and send the canoe along for half-a-cable's length towards a place where, under the ledge of the inner reef, both *afulu sama sama* and *afulu lanu uli* (yellow and purple mullet) are certain to be found; and, as the little craft slips along, a large gar—green-backed, silvery-sided, and more than a yard long —may dart after you like a gleaming, hiltless rapier skimming the surface of the water. If you put out a line with a hook—baited with almost anything—a bit of

fish, a strip of white or red rag—you will have some sport, for these great gars are a hard-fighting fish, and do the tarpon jumping-trick to perfection. But if you have not a line in readiness you can wait your chance, and as he comes close alongside, break his back with a blow from the sharp blade of your paddle, and jump overboard and secure him ere he sinks.

"Not very sportsmanlike," some people will say; but the South Sea native is very utilitarian, and it takes a keen eye and hand to do the thing neatly. And not only are these gars excellent eating—like all surface-feeding, or other fish which show a "green" backbone when cooked; but fore and aft strips cut from their sheeny sides make splendid bait for deep-sea habitants, such as the giant sea bass and the 200-pounder "coral" cod.

Under the ledge of the inner reef, if you get there before the sun is too far to the westward, so that your eyes are not blinded by its dazzling, golden light, you will see, as you drop your line for the yellow and purple mullet which swim deep down over the fine coral sand, some of the strangest shaped, most fantastically, and yet beautifully coloured rock fish imaginable. As you pull up a mullet (or a green and golden striped wrasse which has seized the bait not meant for him), many of these beautiful creations of Nature will follow it up to within a few feet of the canoe, wondering perhaps what under the sea it means by acting in such a manner; others—small creatures of the deepest, loveliest blue—flee in terror at the unwonted commotion, and hide themselves among the branching glories of their coral home.

# "*LUCK*"

## CHAPTER I

A "HARD" man was Captain William Rodway of Sydney, New South Wales, and he prided himself upon the fact. From the time he was twenty years of age, he had devoted himself to making and saving money, and now at sixty he was worth a quarter of a million.

He began life as cabin boy on a north-country collier brig; was starved, kicked, and all but worked to death; and when he came to command a ship of his own, his north-country training stood him in good stead—starving, kicking, and working his crew to death came as naturally to him as breathing. He spared no one, nor did he spare himself.

From the very first everything went well with him. He saved enough money by pinching and grinding his crew—and himself—to enable him to buy the vessel to which he had been appointed. Then he bought others, established what was known as Rodway's Line, gave up going to sea himself, rented an office in a mean street, where he slept and cooked his meals, and worked harder

than ever at making money, oblivious of the sneers of those who railed at his parsimony. He was content.

One Monday morning at nine o'clock he took his seat as usual in his office, and began to open his pile of letters, his square-set, hard face, with its cold grey eyes, looking harder than ever, for he had been annoyed by the old charwoman who cleaned his squalid place asking him for more wages.

He was half-way through his correspondence when a knock sounded.

"Come in," he said gruffly.

The door opened, and a handsome, well-built young man of about thirty years of age entered.

"Good morning, Captain Rodway."

"Morning, Lester. What do you want? Why are you not at sea?" and he bent his keen eyes upon his visitor.

"I'm waiting for the water-boat; but otherwise I'm ready to sail."

"Well, what is it then?"

"I want to know if it is a fact that you will not employ married men as captains?"

"It is."

"Will you make no exception in my favour?"

"No."

"I have been five years in your employ as mate and master of the *Harvest Home*, and I am about to marry."

"Do as you please, but the day you marry you leave my service."

The young man's face flushed. "Then you can give me my money, and I'll leave it to-day."

"Very well. Sit down," replied the old man, reaching for his wages book.

"There are sixty pounds due to you," he said; "go on board and wait for me. I'll be there at twelve o'clock with the new man, and we'll go through the stores and spare gear together. If everything is right, I'll pay your sixty pounds—if not, I'll deduct for whatever is short. Good morning."

At two o'clock in the afternoon Captain Tom Lester landed at Circular Quay with his effects and sixty sovereigns in his pocket.

Leaving his baggage at an hotel he took a cab, drove to a quiet little street in the suburb of Darling Point, and stopped at a quaint, old-fashioned cottage surrounded by a garden.

The door was opened by a tall, handsome girl of about twenty-two.

"Tom!"

"Lucy!" he replied, mimicking her surprised tone. Then he became grave, and leading her to a seat, sat beside her, and took her hand.

"Lucy, I have bad news. Rodway dismissed me this morning, and I have left the ship."

The girl's eyes filled. "Never mind, Tom. You will get another."

"Ah, perhaps I might have to wait a long time. I have another plan. Where is Mrs. Warren? I must tell her that our marriage must be put off."

"Why should it, Tom? I don't want it to be put off. And neither does she."

"But I have no home for you."

"We can live here until we have one of our own. Mother will be only too happy."

"Sure?"

"Absolutely, or I would not say it."

"Will you marry me this day week?"

"Yes, dear—to-day if you wish. We have waited two years."

"You're a brave little woman, Lucy," and he kissed her. "Now, here is my plan. I can raise nearly a thousand pounds. I shall buy the *Dolphin* steam tug—I can get her on easy terms of payment—fill her with coal and stores, and go to Kent's Group in Bass's Straits, and try and refloat the *Braybrook Castle*. I saw the agents and the insurance people this morning—immediately after I left old Rodway. If I float her, it will mean a lot of money for me. If I fail, I shall at least make enough to pay me well by breaking her up. The insurance people know me, and said very nice things to me."

"Will you take me, Tom?"

"Don't tempt me, Lucy. It will be a rough life, living on an almost barren, rocky island, inhabited only by black snakes, albatrosses, gulls and seals."

"Tom, you *must*. Come, let us tell mother."

Three days later they were married, and at six o'clock in the evening the newly-made bride was standing beside her husband on the bridge of the *Dolphin*, which was steaming full speed towards Sydney Heads, loaded down almost to the waterways with coals and stores for four months.

## CHAPTER II

TWO months had passed, and the sturdy *Dolphin* was lying snugly at anchor in a small, well-sheltered cove on one of the Kent's Group of islands. Less than a hundred yards away was one of the rudest attempts at a house ever seen—that is, externally—for it was built with wreckage from many ships and was roofed with tarpaulins and coarse "albatross" grass. Seated on a stool outside the building was Mrs. Lester, engaged in feeding a number of noisy fowls with broken-up biscuit, but looking every now and then towards the *Braybrook Castle*, which lay on the rocks a mile away with only her lower masts standing. It was nearing the time when her husband and his men would be returning from their usual day's arduous toil. She rose, shook the biscuit crumbs from her apron, and walking down to the *Dolphin*, anchored just in front of the house, called—

"Manuel."

A black, woolly head appeared above the companion way, and Manuel, the cook of the wrecking party, came on deck, jumped into the dinghy alongside and sculled ashore.

"Manuel, you know that all the men are having

supper in the house to-night," she said, as the man—a good-natured Galveston negro—stepped on shore.

"Yes, ma'am."

"Well, I've done all *my* share of the cooking—I've made two batches of bread, and the biggest sea pie you ever saw in your life, but I want two buckets of water from the spring."

"All right, ma'am. I'll tote 'em up fo' yo' right away."

"Please do. And I'll come with you. Captain Lester and the others won't be here for half an hour yet, and I want to show you some curious-looking stuff I saw on the beach this morning. It looks like dirty soap mixed with black shells, like fowl's beaks."

The negro's face displayed a sudden interest. "Mixed with shells, yo' say, ma'am. Did yo' touch it?"

"No—it looks too unpleasant."

The negro picked up the buckets, and, followed by Mrs. Lester, set out along a path which led to a rocky pool of some dimensions filled with rain water.

"Leave the buckets till we come back, Manuel. We have not far to go."

She led the way to the beach, and then turning to the left walked along the hard, white sand till they came to a bar of low rocks covered with sea-moss and lichen. Lying against the seaward face of the rock was a pile of driftweed, kelp, crayfish shells, &c., and half buried in *débris* was the object that had aroused her curiosity.

"There it is, Manuel," she said, pointing to an irregularly-shaped mass of a mottled grey, yellow and

brown substance, looking like soap, mixed with cinders and ashes.

The negro whipped out his sheath knife, plunged it into the mass, then withdrew it, pressed the flat of the blade to his nostrils, and then uttered a yell of delight, clapped his hands, took off his cap and tossed it in the air, and rolled his eyes in such an extraordinary manner, that Mrs. Lester thought he had become suddenly insane.

"Yo' am rich woman now, ma'am," he said in his thick, fruity voice. "Dat am ambergris. I know it well 'nuff. I was cook on a whaleship fo' five years, and have handled little bits of ambergris two or three times, but no one in de world, I believe, ever see such a lump like dis."

"Is it worth anything then?"

"Worth anyting, ma'am! It am worth twenty-two shillings de ounce!"

He knelt down and began clearing away the weed till the whole mass was exposed, placed his arms around it, and partly lifted it.

"Dere is more'n a hundredweight," he chuckled, as he looked up at Mrs. Lester, who was now also feeling excited. "Look at dis now."

He cut out a slice of the curious-looking oleaginous stuff, struck a match and applied the light. A pale yellow flame was the result, and with it there came a strong but pleasant smell.

Mrs. Lester had never heard of ambergris to her recollection, but Manuel now enlightened her as to its uses—the principal being as a developer of the strength of all other perfumes.

Such a treasure could not be left where it was—exposed to the risk of being carried away by the tide, so the negro at once went to work with his knife, cutting it into three pieces, each of which he carried to the house, and put into an empty barrel. Then he returned and carefully searched for, and picked up the minutest scraps which had broken off whilst he was cutting the "find" through.

Just at sunset, Lester and his gang of burly helpers returned tired and hungry, but highly elated, for they had succeeded in getting out an unusual amount of valuable cargo.

"We've had great luck to-day, Lucy," cried Lester, as he strode over the coarse grass in his high sea boots; "and, all going well, we shall make the first attempt to pull the ship off the day after to-morrow."

"And I have had luck too," said his wife, her fair, sweet face, now bronzed by the sun, glowing as she spoke. "But come inside first, and then I'll tell you."

The interior of the dwelling consisted of two rooms only—a small bedroom and a large living room which was also used as a kitchen. It was quite comfortably furnished with handsome chairs, lounges, chests of drawers, and other articles taken from the cabin of the stranded ship. The centre of the room was occupied by a large deal table made by one of the men, and a huge fire of drift timber blazed merrily at one end. Manuel was laying the table, his black face beaming with suppressed excitement, and the rough, sea-booted wreckers entered one by one and sat down. Mrs. Lester bade them smoke if they wished.

"Well, boys," said their leader to the wrecking party —of whom there were thirty—"we all deserve a drink before supper. Help yourselves to whatever you like," and he pointed to a small side-table covered with bottles of spirits and glasses. Then Lucy, after they had all satisfied themselves, walked over to the cask containing her "find," and standing beside it, asked if they would all come and look at the contents and see if they knew what it was. Lester, thinking she had succeeded in catching a young seal, looked on with an amused smile.

One by one the men came and looked inside the cask, felt the greasy mass with their horny fingers, and each shook his head until the tenth man, who, the moment he saw it, gave a shout.

"Why, I'm blest if it ain't ambow-grease!"

Lester started. "Ambergris! Nonsense!" and then he too uttered a cry of astonishment as a second man—an old whaler—darted in front of him, and, pinching off a piece of the "find," smelt it.

"Hamble-grist it is, sir," he cried, "and the cask is chock-full of it."

"Turn it out on the floor," said Lester, who knew the enormous value of ambergris, "and let us get a good look at it. Light all the lamps, Lucy."

The lamps were lit, and then Manuel repeated his experiment by burning a piece, amid breathless excitement. No further doubt could exist, and then Manuel, taking a spring balance (weighing up to 50 lbs.) from the wall, hung it to a rafter, whilst the men put the lot into three separate bags and suspended them to the hook in turn.

"Forty-five pounds," cried the mate of the *Dolphin*, as the first bag was hooked on. "Come on with the next one."

"Thirty-nine pounds."

"*And* thirty-four pounds makes a hundred and eighteen," said Lester, bending down and eagerly examining the dial.

"How much is it worth, skipper?" asked the tug's engineer.

"Not less than £1 an ounce——"

"No, sah," cried Manuel, with an *ex cathedra* air, "twenty-two shillings, sah. Dat's what the captain of de *Fanny Long* Hobart Town whaleship got fo' a piece eleven poun' weight in Sydney last June. And I hear de boys sayin' dat he would hab got £1 5s. only dat dere was a power of squids' beaks in it—and dere's not many in dis lot, so it's gwine to bring more."

He explained that the pieces of black shell, which looked like broken mussel shells, were in reality the beaks of the squid, upon which the sperm whale feeds. Then, for the benefit of those of the party, he and the two other ex-whalemen described the cause of the formation of this peculiar substance in the body of the sperm whale.

Lester took pencil and paper and made a rapid calculation.

"Boys, we'll say that this greasy-looking stuff is worth only a pound an ounce—though I don't doubt that Manuel is right. Well, at £1 an ounce, it comes to eighteen hundred and eighty-eight pounds."

"Hurrah for Mrs. Lester!" cried Lindley, the mate.

## "LUCK"

"She has brought us luck from the first, and now she has luck herself."

The men cheered her again and again, for there was not one of them that had not a rough affection for their captain's violet-eyed wife. They had admired her for her pluck even in making the voyage to this desolate spot, and her constant cheerfulness and her kindness and attention in nursing three of them who had been seriously ill cemented their feelings of devotion to her. There was a happy supper party in "Wreck House"—as Lucy had named her strangely-built abode—that night, and it was not until the small hours of the morning that the men went off to sleep on the tug, and left Lucy and her husband to themselves.

"I'm too excited to sleep now, Tom," she said. "Come, I must show you the place where I found it. It is not a bit cold. And oh! Tom, I'm beginning to love this lonely island, and the rough life, and the tame seals, and the wild goats, and the fowls, and black Manuel, and, and—oh, everything! And look, Tom dear, over there at the lighthouse at Deal Island. I really believe the light was never shining as it is to-night. Oh! all the world is bright to me."

## CHAPTER III

TWO days later, and after nearly fifteen weeks of arduous and unremitting labour, there came, one calm night, a glorious spring tide, and the *Dolphin*, under a full head of steam, and with her stout, broad frame quivering and throbbing and panting, tugged away at the giant hulk of the stranded ship; and the ship's own donkey engine and winch wheezed and groaned as it slowly brought in inch by inch a heavy coir hawser made fast to a rock half a cable length ahead of the tug. And then the *Braybrook Castle* began to move, and the wrecking gang cheered and cheered until they were hoarse, and the second engineer of the tug and two stokers, stripped to their waists, with the perspiration streaming down their roasting bodies, answered with a yell—and then, lying well over on her starboard bilge, the great ship slid off stern first into deep water, and Tom Lester's heart leapt within him with joy and pride.

Lucy, as excited as any one else, was on the bridge with him, her face aglow, and her hand on the lever of the engine-room telegraph.

"Half-speed, Lucy."

As the bell clanged loudly, and the heart of the sturdy tug beat less frantically, the wrecking gang on

board the ship under Lindley slipped their end of the coir hawser from the winch barrel, and worked like madmen to get the ship on an even keel by cutting adrift the lashings of several hundred barrels of cement (part of the cargo) which were piled up on the starboard side of the main deck, and letting them plunge overboard. As the ship righted herself inch by inch, and finally stood up on an even keel, Lester made an agreed-upon signal —blowing his whistle thrice—for Lindley to stand by his anchors, which were all ready to let go.

His device of getting up the barrels of cement from the lower hold, and stowing them against the iron deck stanchions (having previously cut away the bulwark plates) so as to give the vessel a big cant to starboard, had answered perfectly; for, high as was the tide that night, the *Dolphin*, though so powerful, could not have moved a ship of 1,500 tons with her keel still partly sustaining her weight on the rocks on which she had struck. By canting her as he had done, she had actually floated—and no more than floated—an hour before the tide was at its full.

Half an hour later the *Braybrook Castle* had been towed round to a little bay just abreast of "Wreck House," and the tug's engines stopped.

"All ready, Lindley?" shouted Lester.

"All ready sir."

"Then let go."

At a tap from Lindley's hammer, the great anchor plunged down, and the flaked out cable roared as it flew through the hawse-pipes, drowning the loud "Hurrah" of the men on board.

"What is it, Lindley?" cried Lester, "ten fathoms?"

"Twelve, sir."

"Give her another twenty-five. It's good holding ground and there is plenty of room for her to swing. Lindley!"

"Yes, sir."

"We have had a bit of good luck, eh?"

"Yes, sir. That is because Mrs. Lester is on the tug. She brings us good luck."

Lester laughed and turned to his wife. "Do you hear that, Lucy?"

She was gazing intently over to the westward, but turned to him the moment he spoke.

"Tom, I can see a blue light over there. . . . Ah, see, there is a rocket! What is it?"

Lester took his night glasses and looked.

"There is a ship ashore somewhere between here and the Deal Island light," he said, and then he rang, "Go astern," to the engine-room.

"Lindley," he called as soon as the tug backed alongside the *Braybrook Castle*, "there is a ship ashore about four miles away from us to the westward. My wife noticed her signals a few minutes ago."

"More salvage, sir," bawled Lindley, "Mrs. Lester is bringing us more luck. What's to be, sir?"

"I want ten or a dozen men, and I'll go and see what I can do. You are all right, aren't you?"

"Right as rain, sir."

Fifteen, instead of a dozen men slid down a line on to the deck of the tug, and Lucy, at a nod from her

husband, turned on "Full steam ahead," and Lester whistled down the speaking-tube.

"Hallo!" was the response.

"Give it to her, Patterson, for all she's worth. There is a ship ashore about four miles away. She is burning blue lights and sending up rockets."

Five minutes later, the *Dolphin* was tearing through the water at her top speed—eleven knots—and Patterson came up on the bridge.

"Who saw the seegnals first?" he inquired.

"I did, Mr. Patterson," said Lucy.

"Ay, I thoct as much, Mistress Leslie. Even that lazy, sheeftless Irish fireman loon ae mine, Rafferty, said ye'd bring us mair guid luck." Then he dived below again to the engines so dear to his Scotsman's heart.

The night was dark, but calm and windless, and the panting tug tore her way through a sea as smooth as glass towards where the ghastly glare of the last blue light had been seen. Twenty minutes later, Lester caught sight of the distressed ship. She was lying on her beam ends, and almost at the same moment came a loud hail—

"Steamer ahoy!"

"Clang!" went the telegraph, and the *Dolphin's* engines stopped, and then went astern, just in time to save her from crashing into a boat crowded with men; a second boat was close astern of the first. They came alongside, and the occupants swarmed over the tug's low bulwarks, and an old greybearded man made his way up to Lester.

"My cowardly crew have forced me to abandon my ship. We were caught in a squall yesterday, and thrown on our beam ends." Then he fell down in a fit.

"Veer those boats astern," cried Lester to his own men, "I'm going to hook on to that ship!"

Bailey, one of his best men, gave a yell.

"More luck, boys. Mrs. Lester!"

As the poor captain was carried off the bridge into the little cabin, the *Dolphin* went ahead, and in a quarter of an hour, Bailey and his men had cut away the masts and the tug had the ship in tow.

At daylight next morning Lester brought her into the little bay where the *Braybrook Castle* lay, and Bailey anchored her safely.

When Lester boarded her he found she was the *Harvest Queen*, sister ship to the *Harvest Maid*, *Harvester*, and his own last command, the *Harvest Home*, all ships of 1,500 tons, and belonging to Captain James Rodway.

"Why didn't you cut away her masts?" he said to the unfortunate captain later on.

"Ah, you don't know my owner," the old man replied, "and besides that, I could have righted the ship if my crew had stuck to me. But after being eighteen hours on our beam ends, they took fright and lowered the boats. I'm a ruined man."

"Not at all. You have done your duty and I'll give you command of another ship to-day—the *Braybrook Castle*. You have nothing further to do with the *Harvest Queen*. She was an abandoned ship. She's mine now. Salvage, you know."

The old man nodded his head. "Yes, I know that. And you'll make a pot out of her."

"What is she worth?"

"Ship and cargo are worth £30,000. We loaded a general cargo in London."

"That will be a bit of a knock for Rodway."

"Do you know him?" asked Captain Blake in surprise.

"I do indeed! I was master of the *Harvest Home*. Now come ashore. My wife is getting us something to eat."

## CHAPTER IV

AT the end of another four weeks, the *Braybrook Castle*, with three-fourths of the cargo she had brought from London, sailed for Sydney under the command of Captain Blake of the *Harvest Queen*, and the *Harvest Queen* under jury masts, and with her valuable cargo undamaged, was ready to sail, escorted by the *Dolphin* on the following day, with Lindley as master.

The last night at "Wreck House" was even a merrier and happier one than that on which the wrecking party celebrated Lucy's "find." But yet Lucy herself felt a little sad at saying farewell to this wild spot, where amid the roar of the ever-beating surf, and the clamour of the gulls and terns, she had spent the four happiest months of her life. The rough food, the fresh sea-air, and the active life had, Lester declared, only served to increase her beauty, and she herself had never felt so strong and in such robust health before. Almost every day in fine weather she had taken a walk to some part of the interior of the island, or along the many white beaches, filling a large basket with sea-birds' eggs, or collecting the many beautiful species of cowries

and other sea-shells with which the beaches were strewn. Years before, another wrecking party had left some goats on the island, and these had thriven and increased amazingly. Her husband's men had shot a great number for food, and captured three or four, which supplied them with milk, and these latter, with their playful kids, and a number of fowls which had been brought from Sydney in the *Dolphin*, together with a pair of pet baby seals, made up what she called her "farmyard." On one part of the island there was a dense thicket of low trees, the resort not only of hundreds of wild goats, but of countless thousands of terns and other sea-birds, who had made it their breeding ground. It was situated at the head of a tiny land-locked bay, the beach of which was covered with the weather-worn spars and timbers of some great ship which had gone ashore there perhaps thirty or forty years before. The whole of the foreshores of the island, however, were alike in that respect, for it had proved fatal to many a good ship, even from the time that gallant navigator Matthew Flinders had first discovered the group.

On the morning of the last day of the stay of the wrecking party on the island, Lucy set out for this place, remembering that on her last visit she had left a basket of cowries there. Bidding her beware of black snakes, for the place was noted for these deadly reptiles, Lester went off on board the *Harvest Queen*.

An hour afterwards, as Lester was engaged with Lindley in the ship's cabin, a man on deck called down the skylight to him.

"Here is Mrs. Lester coming back, sir. She's running, and is calling for you."

With a dreadful fear that she had been bitten by a snake, Lester rushed on deck, jumped into a boat, and was ashore in a few minutes. Lucy, too exhausted to come down to the boat and meet him, had sat down in front of the now nearly empty house.

"I'm all right, Tom," she panted, as he ran up to her, "but I've had a terrible fright," and she could not repress a shudder. "I have just seen three skeletons in the thicket scrub, and all about them are strewn all sorts of things, and there are two or three small kegs, one of which is filled with money, for the end has burst and the money has partly run out on the sand."

Lester sprang to his feet, and called out to the two men who had pulled him ashore to come to him.

"Mrs. Lester's luck again!" he cried.

"Mrs. Lester's luck again!" bawled one of the men to the rest of the wrecking party on board the *Harvest Queen*, and in an instant the cry was taken up, and then came a loud cheer, as, disregarding discipline, all hands tumbled into a boat alongside, frantically eager to learn what had occurred.

Lester waited for them, and then Lucy gave a more detailed account of how she made her discovery.

"I found my basket where I had left it, and had just sat down to take off my shoes, which were filled with sand, when a goat with two of the sweetest little kids you ever saw in your life came suddenly out from behind a rock. The kids were not more than a day or two old, and I determined to catch at least one of them to take

home. The moment the mother saw me she ran off with her babies, and I followed. They dived into the thicket, and led me *such* a dance, for they ran much faster than I thought they could.

"I had never been so far into the scrub before, and felt a little bit frightened—it was so dark and quiet—but I was too excited to give up, so on I sped until the nanny and kids ran into what seemed a tunnel in the thick scrub. It is really a road made by the goats and is only about three feet high, the branches and creepers making a regular archway overhead. I stooped down and followed, and in a few minutes came to a little space which was open to the sky; for the sunlight was so bright that, coming out of the dark tunnel place, I was quite dazzled for a few moments, and had to put my hands over my eyes.

"When I looked about, I saw that the ground was strewed with all sorts of things—rotten boards and boxes, and ships' blocks, and empty bottles and demi-johns, with all the cane covering gone. Then I saw the three kegs, and noticed one had burst open or rotted away, and that it was filled with what looked like very large and dirty nickel pennies. I went to it and took some up, and saw they were crown pieces! Of course, I was at once wildly excited, and thought no more of the dear little kiddies, when I heard one of them cry out—quite near—and saw it, lying down exhausted, about ten yards away. I was running over to it when I saw those three dreadful skeletons. They are lying quite close to each other, near some brass cannons and a lot of rusty ironwork. I was so terrified that I forgot all

about the poor kid, and—and, well, that is all; and here I am with my skirt in rags, and my face scratched, and my hair loose, and 'all of a bobbery,' as Manuel says."

"Boys," said Lester, "I'm pretty sure I know how those poor fellows' bones come to be there. An East Indiaman—the *Mountjoy*—was lost somewhere on the Kent Group about sixty years ago; and I have read that she had a lot of specie on board. Now, as soon as Mrs. Lester has rested a bit, we'll start."

"I'll carry you, ma'am," said Bailey, a herculean creature of 6 ft. 6 in., and stepping into "Wreck House" he brought out a chair, seated Lucy on it, and amidst applause and laughter, lifted it up on his mighty shoulders as if she was no more weight than the chair itself.

She guided them to the spot, and within an hour, not only the three small casks—all of which were filled with English silver money, but the contents of two others, which were found lying partly buried in the sandy soil, were brought to the house. And then began the exciting task of counting the coins, which took some time, and when Lester announced the result, a rousing cheer broke from the men.

"Six thousand, two hundred and seven pounds, four shillings, boys; all with the blessed picture of good old George the Third on them. Lucy, my dear, let us drink your health."

Lucy drew him aside for a minute or two ere she complied with his request, and with sparkling eyes she talked earnestly to him.

"Of course I will, dear," he said.

"Now, boys," he cried, as Lucy brought out two bottles of brandy, and some cups and glasses, "let us drink my wife's health. She has brought us good luck. And she and I are dividing a thousand pounds between you, with an extra fifty for Manuel; for I'm pretty well certain that the Home Government can't claim any royalty."

The rough wreckers cheered and cheered again, as they drank to "Mrs. Lester's Luck." They were all being paid high wages, and were worth them, for they had toiled manfully, and the most pleasant relations had always existed between them and Lester.

Immediately after breakfast on the following morning the anchors of the *Harvest Queen* were weighed to the raising chanty of—

"Hurrah, my boys, we're Homeward Bound!"

and then the *Dolphin*, with Lester on the bridge and Lucy beside him at the telegraph, went ahead, and tautened out the tow line, and Lindley made all sail on his stumpy jury masts.

Seventeen days later, the gallant little tug pulled the *Harvest Queen* into Sydney Harbour. "Mrs. Lester's Luck," had been with them the whole voyage, for from the time they had left Kent's Group, till they passed between Sydney Heads, nothing but fine weather and favourable winds had been experienced.

As the *Dolphin*, with the hulking *Harvest Queen* behind her, came up the smooth waters of the harbour to an anchorage off Garden Island, big Bailey, who was

standing beside Lester and Lucy on the bridge, uttered a yell of delight.

"Mrs. Lester's luck again, by all that's holy! There is the *Braybrook Castle* at anchor over in Neutral Bay!"

It was indeed the *Braybrook Castle*, which had arrived only one day previously, and when Lester went on shore a few hours later, he found that he was a richer man by over £17,000 than when he had left Sydney less than six months before.

And "Mrs. Lester's Luck" brought happiness to many other people beside herself and her husband in the city of the Southern Sea, and when a year later, in England, she stood on a stage under the bows of a gallant ship of two thousand tons, built to Lester's order, and broke a bottle of Australian wine against her steel plates, she named her "*The Lucy's Luck!*"

## *BULL-DOGS OF THE SEA*

NOT many sea-going people—outside of professional whalemen or sealers — know much about the "killer" and his habits, and still less of his appearance. Yet this curious whale (for the killer is one of the minor-toothed whales) is known all over the world, though nowhere is it more plentiful than along the eastern and southern coasts of the Australian continent. In the colder seas of the northern part of the globe it is not uncommon; and only last year one was playing havoc, it was stated, with the fishermen's nets off the north-eastern coast of Ireland.

On the eastern seaboard of Australia, however, the killers can be watched at work, even from the shore, particularly from any bluff or headland from which a clear view can be obtained of the sea beneath, and should there be a westerly wind blowing, their slightest movements may be observed; particularly when they are "cruising," *i.e.*, watching for the approach of a "pod" of either humpback or fin-back whales. During the prevalence of westerly winds the sea water becomes very clear, so clear that every rock and stone may be discerned at a depth of six or eight fathoms, and the

killers, when waiting for their prey, will frequently come in directly beneath the cliffs and sometimes remain stationary for half an hour at a time, rolling over and over, or sunning themselves.

First of all, let me describe the killer's appearance. They range in length from ten to twenty feet, have a corresponding girth, and show the greatest diversity of colouring and markings. Their anatomy is very much that of the sperm whale—the one member of the cetacean family which they do not attempt to attack on account of his enormous strength and formidable teeth —and they "breach," "spout" and "sound" like other whales. The jaws are set with teeth of from one or two inches in length, deeply imbedded in the jaw-bone, and when two of these creatures succeed in fastening themselves to the lips of a humpback, even fifty feet in length, they can always prevent him from "sounding" and escaping into deep water, for they cling to the unfortunate monster with bull-dog tenacity, leaving others of their party to rip the blubber from his sides and pendulous belly.

On the coast of New South Wales—particularly at Twofold Bay, where there is a shore whaling station, there are two "pods" or communities of killers which have never left the vicinity within the memory of the oldest inhabitant, and indeed they were first noticed and written about in the year 1790. At other places on the Australian coast there are permanent pods of ten, fifteen or twenty, but those at Twofold Bay are quite famous, and every individual member of them is well-known, not only to the local whalemen, but to many

of the other residents of Twofold Bay as well, and it would go hard with the man who attempted to either kill or injure one of any of the members of the two pods, for the whalemen would be unable to carry on their business were it not for the assistance rendered to them by their friends the killers, whose scientific name, by the way, is *Orca Gladiator*—and a more fitting appellation could never have been applied.

Now as to the colouring and markings—which are not only diverse, but exceedingly curious. Some are of a uniform black, brown, dark grey, or dirty cream; others are black with either streaks or irregular patches of yellow, white or grey: others again are covered with patches of black, white or yellow, ranging in size from half a dozen inches in diameter to nearly a couple of feet. One which the present writer found lying dead on the reef of Nukulaelae Island, in the Ellice Group, was almost a jet black with the exception of some poorly defined white markings on the dorsal fin and belly; another which he saw accidentally killed by a bomb fired at a huge whale off the Bampton Shoals, was of a reddish-brown, with here and there almost true circular blotches of pure white. This poor fellow was twelve feet in length, and his death was caused by his frantic greediness to get at the whale and take his toll of blubber. The whale was struck late in the day, and the sea was so rough that the officer in charge, after having twice tried to get up and use his lance, determined to end the matter with a bomb before darkness came on. At this time there was a "pod" of seven

killers running side by side with the whale and endeavouring to fasten to his lips whenever he came to the surface; and, just as the officer had succeeded in getting within firing distance and discharging the bomb, poor *Gladiator* came in the way, and was killed by the shot, much to the regret of the boat's crew.

For, as I have said, the whalemen—and particularly the shore whalemen, *i.e.*, those who do their whaling from a station on shore—regard, and with good reason, the killers as invaluable allies. Especially is this so in the case of the Twofold Bay shore whalers, for out of every ten whales killed during the season, whether humpbacks, "right" whales, or finbacks, three-fourths are captured through the pack of killers seizing and literally holding them till the boats come up and end the mighty creatures' miseries.

Towards the end of winter an enormous number of whales appear on the Australian coast, coming from the cold Antarctic seas, and travelling northward along the land towards the breeding grounds—the Bampton and Bellona Shoals and the Chesterfield Groups, situated between New Caledonia and the Australian mainland, between 17° and 20° S. The majority of these whales strike the land about Cape Howe and Gabo Island at the boundary line between New South Wales and Victoria—sixty miles south of Twofold Bay. Most of them are finbacks, though these are always accompanied by numbers of humpbacks and a few "right" whales—the most valuable of all the southern cetacea except the spermaceti or cachalot. The latter, however, though they will travel in company with the flying finback and

the timid humpback and "right" whale, has no fear of the killers. He is too enormously strong, and could crush even a full-grown killer to a pulp between his mighty jaws were he molested, and consequently the killers give the cachalot a wide berth as a dangerous customer. The finback, however, swift and lengthy as he is, seldom manages to escape once he is "bailed up," and having no weapon of defence except his flukes (for he is one of the baleen or toothless whales), he has but one chance of his life, and that is to dive to such a depth that his assailants have to let go their hold of him in order to ascend to the surface to breathe.

The finback, I must mention, although the most plentiful of all the whale family, and sometimes attaining the length of ninety feet, is never attacked by whale-boats when he is "loose," *i.e.*, free, and is only captured when his struggles with the ferocious killers have so exhausted him that a boat can approach and dart a harpoon into or lance him. The reason for this immunity of primary attack by boats is that the finback is in the first place of little value when compared to either the humpback or "right" whale, for the coating of blubber is thin, and the plates of baleen (or whalebone) he possesses are very short; and in the second place he is, although so timid a creature, too dangerous to be struck with a harpoon, for he would take the entire whale-line out of three or four boats and then get away with it after all, for it is the swiftest of all the cetacean family, and all whalemen say that no one but a stark lunatic would dream of putting an iron into a loose "finner," such as ranges the

Southern Ocean. I was told, however, of one well-authenticated case off the Azores, where a reckless Portuguese shore-whaler struck a bull finback, which, after taking the lines from four boats (220 fathoms in each) towed them for three hours and then got away, the line having to be cut owing to the creature sounding to such an enormous depth that no more line was available.

The shore whaling parties at Twofold Bay, however, run no risks of this sort. They let their friends, the Gladiators, do most of the work, and find that "finbacking" under these circumstances is fairly profitable, inasmuch as they can tow the carcase ashore, and "try out" the blubber at their leisure.

But, in a case where one of these finbacks is held by killers, it can be approached, as I have said, by shore boats and killed, as is the practice of the Twofold Bay whalemen.

Let the writer now quote, with the publisher's permission, from a work he wrote some years ago describing the way the killers "work in" with their human friends. In this particular instance, however, it was a humpback whale, but as *Orca Gladiator* treats the humpback and "right" whale as he does the lengthy "finner," the extract from the article is quite applicable.

"Let us imagine a warm, sunny day in August at Twofold Bay. The man who is on the look-out at the abandoned old lighthouse built by one Ben Boyd on the southern headland fifty years ago, paces to and fro on the grassy sward, stopping now and then to scan the wide

expanse of ocean with his glass, for the spout of a whale is hard to discern at more than two miles if the weather is misty or rainy. But if the creature is in a playful mood, and 'breaches'—that is, springs bodily out of the water, and falling back, sends up a white volume of foam and spray, like the discharge of a submarine mine, you can see it eight miles away.

"The two boats are always in readiness at the trying-out works, a mile or so up the harbour; so too are the killers, and the look-out man, walking to the verge of the cliff, gazes down.

"There they are, cruising slowly up and down, close in shore, spouting lazily, and showing their wet, gleaming backs and gaff-topsail-like dorsal fins as they rise, roll, and dive again. . . . Some of them have nicknames, and each is well known to his human friends.

"Presently the watchman sees, away to the southward, a white, misty puff, then another, and another. In an instant he brings his glass to bear. 'Humpback!' Quickly two flags flutter from the flagpole, and a fire is lit; and as the flags and smoke are seen, the waiting boats' crews at the trying-out station are galvanised into life by the cry of 'Rush, ho, lads! Humpbacks in sight, steering north-west! Rush and tumble into the boats and away!'

"Round the south head sweeps the first boat, the second following more leisurely, for she is only a 'pick-up' or relief, in case the first is 'fluked' and the crew are tossed high in air, with their boat crushed into matchwood, or meets with some other disaster. And as the leading boat rises to the long ocean swell of the offing, the

killers close in round her on either side, just keeping clear of the sweep of the oars, and 'breaching' and leaping and spouting with the anticipative zest of the coming bloody fray.

"'Easy, lads, easy!' says the old boat-header; 'they are coming right down on us. Billy was right. They're humpbacks, sure enough!'

"The panting oarsmen pull a slower stroke, and then, as they watch the great savage creatures which swim alongside, they laugh in the mirthless manner peculiar to most native-born Australians, for suddenly, with a last sharp spurt of vapour, the killers dive and disappear into the dark blue beneath; for they have heard the whales, and, as is their custom, have gone ahead of the boat, rushing swiftly on below fully fifty fathoms deep. Fifteen minutes later they rise to the surface in the midst of the humpbacks, and half a square acre of ocean is turned into a white, swirling cauldron of foam and leaping spray. The bull-dogs of the sea have seized the largest whale of the pod or school—a bull—and are holding him for the boat and for the deadly lance of his human foes. The rest of the humpbacks rise high their mighty flukes and 'sound' a hundred—two hundred—fathoms down, and, speeding seaward, leave the unfortunate bull to his dreadful fate.

("And in truth it is a dreadful fate, and the writer of this sketch can never forget one day, as he and a little girl of six watched, from a grassy headland on the coast of New South Wales, the slaughter of a monstrous whale by a drove of killers, that the child wept and shuddered and hid her face against his shoulder.)

"Ranging swiftly alongside of him, from his great head down to the 'small' of his back, the fierce killers seize his body in their savage jaws and tear great strips of blubber from off his writhing sides in huge mouthfuls, and then jerking the masses aside, take another and another bite. In vain he sweeps his flukes with fearful strokes from side to side—the bull-dogs of the sea come not within their range; in vain he tries to 'sound'—there is a devil on each side of his jaws, their cruel teeth fixed firmly into his huge lips; perhaps two or three are underneath him tearing and riving at the great rough corrugations of his grey-white belly; whilst others, with a few swift, vertical strokes of their flukes, draw back for fifty feet or so, charge him amidships, and strike him fearful blows on the ribs with their bony heads. Round and round, in ever-narrowing circles as his strength fails, the tortured humpback swims, sometimes turning on his back or side, but failing, failing fast.

"'He's done for, lads. Pull up; stand up, Jim.'

"The boat dashes up, and Jim, the man who is pulling bow oar, picks up his harpoon. A minute later it flies from his hand, and is buried deep into the body of the quivering animal, cutting through the thick blubber as a razor would cut through the skin of a drum.

"'Stern all!' and the harpooner tumbles aft and grips the steer oar, and the steersman takes his place in the head of the boat and seizes his keen-edged lance. But 'humpy' is almost spent, and though by a mighty effort he 'ups flukes' and sounds, he soon rises, for the killers thrust him upwards to the surface again. Then

the flashing lance—two, three swift thrusts into his 'life,' a gushing torrent of hot, dark blood, and he rolls over on his side, an agonised trembling quivers through his vast frame, the battle is over and his life is gone.

"And now comes the curious and yet absolutely truly described final part that the killers play in this ocean tragedy. They, the moment the whale is dead, close around him, and fastening their teeth into his body, by main strength bear it to the bottom. Here—if they have not already accomplished it—they tear out the tongue, and eat about one-third of the blubber. In from thirty-six to forty hours the carcase will again rise to the surface, and as, before he was taken down, the whalemen have attached a line and buoy to the body, its whereabouts are easily discerned from the look-out on the headland; the boats again put off and tow it ashore to the trying-out works. The killers, though they have had their fill of blubber, accompany the boats to the head of the bay and keep off the sharks, which would otherwise strip off all the remaining blubber from the carcase before it had reached the shore. But once the boats are in the shallow water, the killers stop, and then with a final 'puff! puff!' of farewell to their human friends, turn and head seaward to resume their ceaseless watch and patrol of the ocean.

"The killers never hurt a man. Time after time have boats been stove in or smashed into splinters by a whale, either by an accidental blow from his head or a sudden lateral sweep of his monstrous flukes, and the

crew left struggling in the water or clinging to the oars and pieces of wreckage; and the killers have swum up to, looked at, and smelt them, but never have they touched a man with intent to do him harm. And wherever the killers are, the sharks are not, for Jack Shark dreads a killer as the devil is said to dread holy water. Sometimes I have seen 'Jack' make a rush in between the killers, and rip off a piece of hanging blubber, but he will carefully watch his chance to do so."

* * * * *

One of the most experienced whaling masters of New Bedford, with whom the writer once cruised from the Gilbert Islands to Yap in the Western Carolines, told him that on one occasion when he was coming from the shore to his ship, which was lying to off the Chatham Islands, the boat was followed by a pack of five killers. They swam within touch of the oars, much to the amusement of the crew, and presently several of what are called "right whale" porpoises made their appearance, racing along ahead of the boat, whereupon Captain Allen went for'ard and picked up a harpoon, for the flesh of this rare variety of porpoise is highly prized. The moment he struck the fish it set off at a great rate, but not quick enough to escape the killers, for though the porpoise was much the swifter fish (were it loose), the weight of the boat and fifty fathoms of line was a heavy handicap. As quickly as possible the men began hauling up to the stricken fish so that Allen might give it the lance, when to their astonishment the killers seized it and literally tore it to pieces in a few minutes.

"If ever I felt mad enough to put an iron into a

'killer' it was then," he said, "but I couldn't do it. And very glad of it I was afterwards, for a week later I had two boats stove in by a whale, and of course, had I hurt one of those beggars of killers, the whole crew would have said it was only a just retribution."

## "*REVENGE*"

ON that fever-stricken part of the coast of the great island of New Britain, lying between the current-swept headland of Cape Stephens and the deep forest-clad shores of Kabaira Bay, there is a high grassy bluff dotted here and there with isolated coco-palms leaning northward to the sea beneath, their broad branches restlessly whipping and bending to the boisterous trade wind. On the western side of the bluff there is a narrow strip of littoral, less than half a mile in width, and thickly clothed with a grove of betel nut, through which the clear waters of a mountain stream flow swiftly out oceanwards across a rocky bar.

Near where the margin of the grove of straight, grey-boled betels touch the steep side of the bluff, there may be seen the outline of a low wall of coral stones, forming three sides of a square, and bound and knit together with vines, creepers, and dank, ill-smelling moss—the growth, decay, and re-growth of three score years. The ground which it encloses is soft and swampy, for the serried lines of betel-trees, with their thick, broad crowns, prevent either sun or wind from penetrating to the spot, and the heavy tropical rains never permit it to dry. It

is a dark, dismal-looking place, only visited by the savage inhabitants when they come to collect the areca-nuts, and its solitude is undisturbed save by the flapping of the hornbill's wings as he carries food to his imprisoned mate, or the harsh screech of a white cockatoo flying overhead to the mountain forest beyond.

Yet sixty years ago it was not so, for then on the shore facing the bar stood a native village, and within the now ruined wall were the houses of three white men, who from their doorways could see the blue Pacific, and the long curve of coast line with cape and headland and white line of reef stretching away down to the westward in the misty tropic haze.

Walk inside the old, broken walls, and you will see, half-buried in the moist, steaming, and malarious ground, some traces of those who dwelt there—a piece of chain cable, two or three whaler's trypots, a rotten and mossgrown block or two, only the hardwood sheaves of which have resisted the destroying influences of the climate; a boat anchor, and further towards the creek, the mouldering remains of a capstan, from the drumhead holes of which long grey-green pendants of moss droop down upon the weather-worn, decaying barrel, like the scanty ragged beard that falls on the chest of some old man worn out with poverty and toil.

That is all that one may see now; for the dense, evergrowing jungle has long since hidden or rotted all else that was left.

* * * * *

The three men were named Ford, Adams, and Sten-

house. They were *beche-de-mer* fishers, and for nearly a year had been living in this savage spot—the only white men inhabiting the great island, whose northern coast line sweeps in an irregular half-moon curve for more than three hundred miles from Cape Stephens to within sight of the lofty mountains of New Guinea. In pursuit of their avocation, death from disease, or from the spears or clubs of the treacherous, betel-chewing, stark-naked cannibals among whom they dwelt was ever near, but to the men of their iron resolution and dauntless courage that mattered not Two years' labour meant for them a large sum of money —enough to enable them to return with their wives and families and native dependents, to those more restful islands in the Western Carolines whence they had come a year before.

All three men were employed by one firm in Singapore, whose ship had brought them with their families and some thirty or forty natives of Yap to New Britain. Nine months after their landing, a small schooner had called to replenish their supplies, and ship the cured trepang, which by the most assiduous labour and daring enterprise they had accumulated; and when this story opens, the schooner had been gone some weeks, and they and their native workers were preparing their boats for another cruise along the great barrier reef of New Britain.

Two of these men, Adams and Stenhouse, were old and tried comrades, and in their rough way, devoted to each other. Stenhouse, the elder of the two, had some ten years previously, while sailing along the Pelew

Island, found Adams adrift in an open boat—the sole survivor of a shipwrecked crew of sixteen men, and had nursed him back to life and reason. Later on, Adams had married one of Stenhouse's half-caste daughters. Ford, too, who was an American, was connected by marriage with Stenhouse, and nearly every one of the thirty or forty male and female Caroline Islanders who worked for the three white men were more or less allied to their wives by ties of blood or marriage, and there was not one of them who would not have yielded up his or her life in their defence.

Stenhouse, who was the leader of the adventurous party, was a man of about forty-five years of age, and, like his two comrades, an ex-sailor. He was nearly six feet in height, and possessed of such powers of strength and endurance that his name was known throughout the Western Pacific to almost every white man, but his once handsome features were marred by such a terrible disfigurement, that those who came to know the man and his sterling character always thought or spoke of him with genuine and respectful pity. What had caused this cruel distortion was known to but three other persons besides himself—the mother of his children, his son-in-law, Thomas Adams, and the man who had inflicted the injury; and to spare the reader's feelings as much as possible, it need only be said that the left side of his face had been so injured by violence of some kind as to be pitiful to look upon, the more so as the eye was missing.

* * * * *

Late one evening, just as Stenhouse and his son-in-law,

Adams, were smoking their last pipes before turning in, their comrade entered the house hurriedly, accompanied by one of their native employees, who had been away on a fishing excursion.

"Here's news! There's a big full-rigged ship just anchored under Cape Stephens. Masik boarded her, and had a yarn with the mate."

"Where is she from?" asked Stenhouse, turning his one eye upon the native, Masik.

"I know not, master. But she is a great ship with many men on board—some white, and some yellow, with shaven heads.

"Ah, a Calcutta-Sydney ship, most likely," said Stenhouse to his comrades. Then turning to Masik—"Why came she here? Didst ask?"

"Aye," replied the man in his native tongue; "the ship came here because there be many sick, and two dead men on board. It is a strong sickness."

"Didst speak of us white men here?"

The man nodded. "Aye, and the mate said that the captain would like thee all to come to the ship; but to hasten, for when the two men are buried to-morrow the ship will sail. And the mate gave me these for thee."

Adams eagerly extended his hand for a bundle of newspapers which Masik carried wrapped up in a piece of old sail-cloth.

"This is a god-send," said Adams, as he opened the packet and tossed some of the papers to Stenhouse and Ford, "only about six months old. Hallo, here's the name of the ship and captain I suppose, on one of them: Roger Fullerton, Esq., Ship *Ramillies*——"

"*What!*"

It was Stenhouse who spoke, and his usual cheerful voice now sounded cracked and discordant, as with an oath he tore the paper from his comrade's hand, read the name, and then sat down, with one hand pressed to his sightless orb, his whole frame trembling from head to foot.

"What is the matter, Ted?" asked Ford anxiously.

Slowly he turned his face towards his comrades. It was white.

"Send them away," he said, "but tell them to call the others and get ready. I am going down to the cape to-night, to that ship. I am going to kill a man."

Ford looked at him wonderingly. Adams, who understood, spoke a few whispered words to the natives, who quickly left the room.

"Tom."

"Yes, Ted."

"Are all the women and children asleep?"

Adams nodded, and Stenhouse silently motioned to him and Ford to be seated. He remained standing.

"Jim Ford," he said quietly, "look at me"—he drew his hand down the distorted side of his face—"and tell me what you would do to a man who made you look like this."

"I would have his life if I swung for it."

"Well, I am going to have this man's life. I shall not be hanged for it, but if I am killed, I look to you, Jim, and you Tom, to stand to my wife and children."

Ford put out his hand impulsively: "All that I have

I owe to you, Ted. I will stand to 'em, so help me God."

"I knew you would. Now, only three people in the world besides me—Tom Adams, my wife, and the man who did it—know what made me the blarsted scarecrow I am; but as I may be a dead man by this time to-morrow, I'll tell you."

He paused, and with his forefinger still pressed firmly on the name on the newspaper, said slowly:—

"This man, Roger Fullerton, was a passenger on the *Mahratta*, East Indiaman. I was his servant. We were bound to Sydney from Table Bay. He was going out to be Commissary-General or something of that kind in New South Wales. We had a rough, mutinous crew on board, and one night there was a fight between them and the officers and passengers. They burst into the cabin, and would have captured the ship but for the mate, who shot one man dead and cut another down. I had nothing to do with them—as God is my witness—for I was only a lad of nineteen, and would have stood to the captain and officers like a man, but I was made prisoner by the mutineers early in the fight. After the row was over, Mr. Fullerton missed his watch and a hundred sovereigns which were in a writing case in his cabin. He accused me of stealing them, and when I hotly denied the charge, knocked me down on deck and kicked me so savagely in the face that I should have been killed if I had not been dragged away from him. As it was, he broke my jaw and destroyed my left eye. But that was not all. When he reached Sydney he charged me with the theft. I got a heavy sentence and

was sent to the coal-mines at Newcastle; but after two years of hell I escaped by stowing away in a Dutch barque bound to Samarang. And now *my* turn has come."

"Are you sure he is the man?" asked the American.

"Quite. He settled in the Colony and married there. I have heard of him from time to time for many years."

* * * * *

Before midnight the three white men, with twenty-five of their native followers armed with muskets and cutlasses, were following the coastline in the direction of Cape Stephens. The night was dark and rainy, but the route was familiar to both Adams and Stenhouse. All night they marched steadily onward, and only when daylight broke did they halt on the banks of a stream to rest and eat. Then, crossing the stream, they struck a native path which led to the shore.

"There she is," said Ford.

The ship lay about a mile from the shore. Stenhouse looked at her earnestly, and then abruptly told his comrades his plans, which were daring but simple. He would await the landing of the boat bringing the dead men ashore for burial, and take them prisoners. In all probability the captain would be in charge, and it was Stenhouse's intention to hold him and his boat's crew as ransom for the man he wanted. He intended no harm to them, but was determined to achieve his object if he had to carry his prisoners off to the mountains, and keep them there till Fullerton was given up to him.

Immediately after breakfast, the watchers saw two

boats leave the ship, and pull in towards a creek which debouched into a sandy cove situated immediately under Cape Stephens. The coastline here was uninhabited, and except for the banks of the creek, which were heavily timbered, presented a succession of rolling, grassy downs, and here and there clumps of *vi* (wild mango) and cedar trees, and Stenhouse felt pretty certain that the burying party would pick upon one of these spots to inter the bodies, and that he could easily cut them off from the boats.

Swiftly and silently they took up a position on the banks of the creek, Stenhouse with his two friends keenly watching the advancing boats from behind the buttressed roots of a giant Indian fig-tree. In a few minutes, the leading boat, in which were six men and an officer, entered the creek, but the water being shallow, grounded on the bar, and the crew got out. The second boat contained four seamen, and three or four persons who were seated aft, and she too took the ground, and then, as her crew stepped out into the water, Stenhouse gripped Adams by the shoulder.

"See, Tom, there he is! The man himself. Look! that big fellow with the white whiskers, sitting between the others." He held a hurried consultation with his comrades, and quickly decided on his course of action.

Both crews were now endeavouring to drag the boats across the shallow bar into the deeper water beyond, but the task was too much for them, and presently the captain, who was in the second boat, ordered them to cease, and said something to the big, white-whiskered man, who nodded his head in approval.

Four seamen then lifted two coffins from the first boat, and, followed by four others carrying their own and their shipmates' arms and some spades, began wading through the water to the shore, directly to where the unseen watchers lay awaiting; and the remainder of the party, leaving the boats with two men on guard, came slowly after them.

Stenhouse pointed to the two boat-keepers, and said something to Ford, who, with half-a-dozen natives, quickly disappeared.

In a few minutes the bearers of the coffins reached the shore, and placed their burdens on the ground to await further orders.

"We shall find clear ground, sir, within a few yards from the bank," began the captain, addressing the tall man, who with bared head and slow step walked by his side, when suddenly there came a rush of a score of half-naked figures, who threw themselves silently upon the party, and overcame them almost without a sound.

"Surrender, or you are all dead men," cried a hoarse voice.

There was no need for the stern summons, for not only were the astonished sailors terrified by the extraordinary suddenness of the attack and the savage appearance of their captors, but their captain, the surgeon, and the big man had their pistols taken from their belts so quickly that resistance was utterly out of the question, covered as they were by half-a-dozen muskets pointed at their breasts.

Then Adams stepped out and addressed the captain.

"No harm will be done to you and your men, but you must remain our prisoners for awhile. Then your arms will be returned to you, and you can go back to your ship. Your boat-keepers are secured."

"What in God's name does this mean?" cried the unfortunate officer.

"Silence, if you value your life," cried the same stern voice that had called upon them to surrender.

The captain turned and sought to discern the speaker, but the muzzle of a pistol was placed menacingly against his chest, and he was again ordered to be silent.

Then at a sign from Adams all the crews' and officers' arms were carried off to the boats by two natives, and the wondering seamen were bidden by Adams to lift the coffins and follow him.

"Do not attempt to escape," he said, speaking to the whole party generally; "if you do you will be shot down without mercy."

As he spoke Ford, with five armed natives, silently joined the rest of the captors. Fullerton, the captain, and the surgeon all looked at him curiously.

"March, gentlemen," he said, pointing with his drawn cutlass to the bearers of the coffins, who were now, guided by Adams, pushing their way through the timber, surrounded by their native guards with muskets cocked.

In ten minutes the belt of timber had been passed through, and captors and captured emerged upon a grassy sward.

"Halt!"

Again that hoarse, strange voice sounded from some-

where near, and the seamen shuddered as they gently laid their burdens on the ground.

"Bury your dead, sir, and have no fear," said Adams to the captain.

Then he and Ford spoke to their followers, who silently drew back and permitted the seamen who carried shovels to advance. The ground was soft and moist, and their task was soon accomplished, and the coffins lowered into their graves.

Then the captain, followed by the surgeon and Roger Fullerton, advanced, prayer-book in hand, and read the burial service, and Adams and Ford wondered somewhat when, at its conclusion, a heavy sob burst from Fullerton.

Quickly the earth was shovelled in, and soon two mounds showed on the sward. Then came the clank of arms, and the mourners were again surrounded by their half-nude guards.

"Follow," said Adams shortly.

He led them for a distance of about a hundred yards, then halted, and the prisoners found themselves in a hollow square.

"Are you going to slaughter unarmed men?" cried the surgeon, who was terrified at the very appearance of the wild-looking Caroline Islanders and their grim, silent leaders.

Adams shook his head, but made no reply.

A heavy footstep sounded in the jungle near them, and Stenhouse, carrying two cutlasses under his arm, strode into the square and stood before Fullerton.

For a moment or two their eyes met, and then Stenhouse raised his hand and touched his distorted face.

" You know me, Mr. Fullerton? "

" I know you. You have come to kill me."

" Yes, unless you kill me." He drew a cutlass from its leather sheath and held its hilt out to the man he hated. Fullerton folded his arms across his chest.

" Take it," said Stenhouse slowly, " or, by Heavens! I'll cut you down as you stand."

" As you will," replied the old man steadily, " but fight you I will not. My life is in your hands. Take it. I am not afraid to die."

Stenhouse drew his cutlass slowly, his one eye shining with a deadly hatred.

" For God's sake, man, whoever you are, whatever your injuries may be, do not shed the blood of an old man on his son's grave! " and the captain sprang forward with outspread, appealing hands.

" His son! " and the point of the gleaming weapon drooped.

" His only son. Have mercy on him, as you hope for mercy yourself."

" Stop, Captain Marsland. Do not ask for mercy for me. I did this man a grievous wrong. My life is his. Let him have his due."

Stenhouse threw down his cutlass with an oath, turned his back on his enemy, and put his hand to his forehead.

Then he faced round sharply, and once more he looked into Fullerton's unmoved face.

" Go," he said.

And without another word he strode away, followed by his comrades and his savage companions.

## *SAUNDERSON AND THE DYNAMITE*

SAUNDERSON was one of those men who firmly believed that he knew everything, and exasperated people by telling them how to do things; and Denison, the supercargo of the *Palestine*, hated him most fervently for the continual trouble he was giving to every one, and also because he had brought a harmonium on board, and played dismal tunes on it every night and all day on Sundays. But, as Saunderson was one of the partners in the firm who owned the *Palestine*, Denison, and Packenham the skipper, had to suffer him in silence, and trust that something might happen to him before long. What irritated Denison more than anything else was that Saunderson frequently expressed the opinion that supercargoes were superfluous luxuries to owners, and that such work "as they tried to do could well be done by the captains, provided the latter were intelligent men."

"Never mind, Tom," said Packenham hopefully, one day, "he's a big eater, and is bound to get the fever if we give him a fair show in the Solomons. Then we can dump him ashore at some missionary's—he and his

infernal groan-box—and go back to Sydney without the beast."

When the *Palestine* arrived at Leone Bay, in Tutuila, Saunderson dressed himself beautifully and went ashore to the mission-house, and in the evening Mrs. O—— (the missionary's wife), wrote Denison a note and asked if he could spare a cheese from the ship's stores, and added a P.S., "What a *terrible* bore he is!" This made the captain and himself feel better.

The next morning Saunderson came on board. Denison was in the cabin, showing a trader named Rigby some samples of dynamite; the trader wanted a case or two of the dangerous compound to blow a boat passage through the reef opposite his house, and Denison was telling him how to use it. Of course Saunderson must interfere, and said *he* would show Rigby what to do. He had never fired a charge of dynamite in his life, nor even seen one fired or a cartridge prepared, but had listened carefully to Denison. Then he sarcastically told Denison that the cheese he had sent Mrs. O—— might have passed for dynamite, it was so dry and tasteless.

"Well, dynamite is made from cheese, you know," said the supercargo deferentially, "just cheese slightly impregnated with picric acid, gastrito-nepenthe, and cubes of oxalicogene."

Saunderson said he knew that, and after telling Rigby that he would walk over to his station before dinner, and show him where to begin operations on the reef, went on shore again.

About twelve o'clock Denison and Rigby went on

shore to test the dynamite, fuse, and caps—first in the water and then on the reef. Just abreast of the mission-house they saw a big school of grey mullet swimming close in to the beach, and Denison quickly picked up a stone, tied it with some string round a cartridge, cut the fuse very short, lit it, and threw it in. There was a short fizz, then a dull, heavy thud, and up came hundreds of the beautiful fish stunned or dead. Saunderson came out of the mission-house and watched the natives collecting them. Denison had half-a-dozen cartridges in his hand; each one was tightly enveloped in many thicknesses of paper, seized round with twine, and had about six inches of fuse, with the ends carefully frayed out so as to light easily.

"Give me some of those," said Saunderson.

The supercargo reluctantly handed him two, and Saunderson remarked that they were very clumsily covered, but he would fix some more himself "properly" another time. Denison sulkily observed that he had no time to waste in making dynamite cartridges look pretty. Then, as Saunderson walked off, he called out and told him that if he was going to shoot fish he would want to put a good heavy stone on the cartridges. Saunderson said when he wanted advice from any one he would ask for it. Then he sent word by a native to Mrs. O—— that he would send her along some fish in a few minutes.

Now within a few hundred yards of the mission-house there was a jetty, and at the end of the jetty was Her Majesty's gunboat *Badger*, a small schooner-rigged wooden vessel commanded by Lieutenant-Commander Muddle, one of the most irascible men that ever

breathed, and who had sat on more Consuls than any one else in the service.

Saunderson went on the jetty followed by a crowd of natives, and looked over into the water. There were swarms of fish, just waiting to be dynamited. He told a native to bring him a stone, and one was brought—a nice round, heavy stone as smooth as a billiard ball—just the very wrong kind of stone. He tied it on the cartridge at last, after it had fallen off four or five times; then, as he did not smoke, and carried no matches, he lit it from a native woman's cigarette, and let it drop into the water. The stone promptly fell off, but the cartridge floated gaily, and drifted along fizzing in a contented sort of way. Saunderson put his hands on his hips, and watched it nonchalantly, oblivious of the fact that all the natives had bolted back to the shore to be out of danger, and watch things.

There was a bit of a current, and the cartridge was carried along till it brought up gently against the *Badger*—just in a nice cosy place between the rudder bearding and the stern-post. Then it went off with a bang that shook the universe, and ripped off forty-two sheets of copper from the *Badger*; and Saunderson fell off the jetty into the water; and the bluejackets who were below came tumbling up on deck; and the gunner, seeing Lieutenant-Commander Muddle rush up from his cabin in his shirt-sleeves with a razor in his hand, thought that he had gone queer again in his head, and had tried to blow up the ship, and was going to cut his throat, and so he rushed at him, and knocked him down and took his razor away, and begged him to be quiet;

and Muddle, thinking it was a mutiny, nearly went into a fit, and struggled so desperately, and made such awful choking noises that two more men sat on him; and the navigating midshipman, thinking it was fire, told the bugler to sound to quarters, and then, seeing the captain being held down by three men, rushed to his assistance, but tripped over something or somebody and fell down and nearly broke his nose; and all the time Saunderson who was clinging to one of the jetty piles, was yelling pitifully for help, being horribly afraid of sharks.

At last he was fished out by Rigby and some natives and carried up to the mission-house and then, when he was able to talk coherently, he sent for Denison, who told him that Commander Muddle was coming for him presently with a lot of armed men and a boatswain with a green bag in which was a "cat," and that he (Saunderson) would first be flogged and then hanged at the *Badger's* yard-arm, and otherwise treated severely, for an attempt to blow up one of Her Majesty's ships; and then Saunderson shivered all over, and staggered out of the mission-house in a suit of Mr. O——'s pyjamas, much too large for him, and met Commander Muddle on the jetty and tried to explain how it occurred, and Muddle called him an infernal, drivelling idiot, and knocked him clean off the jetty into the water again, and used awful language, and told Denison that his chronometers were ruined, and the ship's timbers started, and that he had had a narrow escape from cutting his own throat when the dynamite went off, as he had just begun to shave.

Saunderson was very ill after that, and was in such mortal terror that Muddle and every one else on board

the gunboat meant to kill, wound, or seriously damage him, that he kept inside the mission-house, and said he felt he was dying, and that Mr. O—— would prepare him for the end. So Denison and Packenham, who were now quite cheerful again, sent his traps and his harmonium ashore, and sailed without him, a great peace in their bosoms.

## *THE STEALING OF SA LUIA*

ONE dull rainy morning, soon after daybreak, as the ship *St. George* of New Bedford was cruising for sperm whales between the islands of Tucopia and Vanikoro, the look-out hailed the deck and reported a boat in sight. The captain was called, and a few minutes later appeared and went aloft.

The boat was about three miles distant to leeward, and Captain Elphinstone at once kept the ship away. The wind, however, was so light that it took her some time to get within hailing distance, and then it was discovered that the boat contained three natives—a man and two young girls—who appeared to be greatly exhausted, for after feebly raising their heads for a moment and putting out their hands imploringly, they fell back again.

A boat was quickly lowered from the ship, and the sufferers brought on board, and their own boat, which was a small, native-built craft much like a whale-boat, but with an outrigger attached, was hoisted on board, for she was too good to be turned adrift.

On board the *St. George* was a Samoan named Falaoa. He was a native of the island of Manua, and at once recognised the unfortunates as country-people of

his own. The man, who was in a dreadful state of emaciation, and barely able to raise his voice above a whisper, was over six feet in height, and appeared to be about five-and-twenty years of age; his companions had evidently not undergone as much suffering and did not present the same shocking appearance as he, for the sun had burnt his skin to such a degree that that part of his tattooing which was not covered by the scanty *lava lava* of tappa cloth around his loins had become almost black.

Under the kind and careful treatment they received from Captain Elphinstone and his officers, all three soon recovered, and ten days after they had been rescued, the following entry was made in the ship's log:—

"This day, at their own request, we landed the three Samoans at the island of Nufilole, one of the Swallow Group, where they were well received by the natives and a white trader. They were accompanied by one of my crew named Falaoa, who begged me to let him go with them, having become much attached to one of the young women. We gave them some arms and ammunition, and some clothing and tobacco. They all behaved with the greatest propriety during their stay on the ship. From where they started in Samoa to where we picked them up in 12° S. is a distance of 1,300 miles."

And here is their story, told by Sā Luia to the wife of Frank Chesson, a white trader then living on the Santa Cruz Islands, in which the Swallow Group is included. Chesson himself had lived in Samoa, and spoke the language well, and the four people remained in his house for many months as welcome guests. A strong

and lasting friendship was formed, and resulted in the trader, his wife and family, and the four Samoans removing to the little island of Fenua-loa, and there founding what is now a colony of Polynesians with language, customs and mode of life generally entirely distinct from their Melanesian neighbours.

* * * * *

I am Sā Luia. I come from Mulifanua, at the lee end of Upolu in Samoa. My father was not only the chief of Mulifanua, but has great lands in the Atua district on the north side of Upolu—lands which came to him through my mother, who died when I was but a week old—and from these lands he had his name, Pule-o-Vaitafe (Lord of many Rivers).

Now it is not well for a daughter to speak unkindly of her father; but this what I now say is true. My father, though he was so rich a man, was very cruel to those who crossed his path, and though he was a brave man in battle, his heart was shrunken up by reason of his avarice and his desire to grow richer, and all Samoa, from Manua in the east to Falealupo in the west, spoke of him as Pule-lima-vale—"Pule the close-fisted"—or Pule fata-ma'a—"Pule the stony-hearted." Yet all this gave him no concern.

"What does it matter to me?" he said to his brother Patiole one day, when Patiole, who was a chief of Manono, reproached him for his meanness in sending away some visitors from Tutuila with such scanty presents that all the people of Mulifanua were ashamed. "What does it matter to me what people say of me? This *malaga* (party of visitors) from Tutuila are eaten

up with poverty. Why should I give them fine mats, and muskets and powder and bullets? Am I a fool? What return can they make to me?"

"They came to do thee honour," said my uncle, putting his hand across his eyes out of respect to my father, who was of higher rank than he, and speaking softly. "They are thy dead wife's relatives, and are of good blood. And thou hast shamed them—and thyself as well—by sending them away empty-handed."

My father laughed scornfully. "What care I for my dead wife's relatives! I have no need of them, and want them not. When I took the daughter of Mauga to wife, Mauga was a great man. Now he and his people are broken and dispersed. Let them go and eat grass or wild yams like pigs. I, Pule-o-Vaitafe, want no needy dependents."

"Thou art a hard man," said my uncle, bending his forehead to the mat on which he sat.

"And thou art a fool," replied my father; "if thy heart pains thee of this, why dost thou not give them all that they wish?"

"Because for me, thy brother, to do so, would put shame on thee, for 'tis thy place and thy honour as head of our family to help these people who have fallen on evil days through warfare," said my uncle sadly.

"Thine then be the place and the honour," said my father scornfully. "I will not begrudge thee either. Naught will I have to do with broken men. Farewell."

That was my father's way. That was his hard, hard heart, which knew neither pity nor remorse. This is how my mother died:

# THE STEALING OF SA LUIA

When I was seven days old, she took me, as is customary with a woman of chiefly rank, to the *fale siva* (town dance house), where I had to be shown to the people, who brought fine mats and tappa cloth, and many other presents. Now my father was filled with anger that my mother had not borne him a male child, for a male child would have meant richer presents—not only from his own people, but from towns and villages far away. So when he saw that instead of such gifts as a new canoe or some very old, rare mats, or muskets, or such other things as would have been given were the child a boy, there were but the usual presents for a girl-child, his lips turned down with scorn, and he muttered a curse. My mother heard him and the tears flowed down her cheeks.

"It may be that my next child will be a boy," she whispered, and then she held me up to my father. "See, Pule, though a girl, she hath thy features, and thou wilt come to love her."

"Tah!" said my father in angry contempt; and without another word he rose and went away.

Then my mother wept silently over me for a long time, for the shame put upon her was very great, and not to be endured. So, with some of her women, she took me to a place called Falema'a, where the cliffs rise up straight from the sea. Her hair was then oiled and dressed, and then she made gifts of her rings of gold and tortoise-shell to her women, and bade them farewell. Then she took me in her arms, and leapt over the cliff into the sea.

It so happened that half-way down the cliff, which is

twelve fathoms high, there was a boy named Manaia. He was collecting the eggs of the sea-bird called *Kanapu* and his canoe was anchored just in front of the base of the cliff. He was a brave boy, and being of a very poor family, had clambered up the steep side of the wall of rock, so that he might find the *kanapu* eggs in the clefts and holes, and sell them to people in exchange for food for his mother and sisters. As he clung to the jagged face of the rock, he saw my mother falling through the air, and in an instant he sprang after her. When she came to the surface, I was still clasped tightly in her arms, and Manaia cried to her to swim to the canoe.

"Nay," she cried, "but take my babe."

And so Manaia took me, and my mother threw up her arms and sank and died.

When my uncle heard of this, he sent a party of his people over from Manono for me, and I was taken to live with him. My father did not interfere, for the manner of my mother's death had made the people murmur, and he was afraid that they might rise in rebellion, and kill or banish him. But yet he tried to get another rich wife, and sent a deputation of his chiefs to Seu Manu of Apia asking for his daughter Sina; and Sina sent him back a piece of wood carved in the semblance of a woman, together with a stone shaped like a heart, with this message—

"This is a good wife for Pule-o-Vaitafe. If she displease him, he can sink her in the sea with a heart of stone."

After that my father tried no more, for the people all round about were murmuring, and he began to feel afraid.

But in no other way did he change, and although Manono is but two leagues distant from Mulifanua, he never came to see me till I was in my fifteenth year, and when I was chosen by the people of Aana to be *Taupo* * of Mulifanua. Then I had to leave my uncle, which made me weep, for although I was proud of the honour done me, I did not wish to leave him and go back to my father. But I had no choice but to obey, and so I was taken back to Mulifanua by a fleet of canoes and *taumualua* (native boats), with great ceremony, and then followed many meetings and much feasting and dancing. I was put under the care of two women, who attended me day and night, as is the custom; they walked, ate, and slept with me, and every day I was taught how to dance, and how to wear my fine mats and long train of tappa, so as to receive or call upon visitors who came to the town from other places in Samoa.

In all the many years that I had spent on Manono, I had not once seen the boy Manaia—he who had taken me from the water—though I had heard of him as having been tattooed and grown into a tall man. But on the same day that I returned and was taken to the *fale taupule* (council house) to be received by the people as their *taupo*, a girl named Selema who attended me whispered his name, and pointed him out to me. He was sitting with the other young men, and like them, dressed in his best, and carrying a musket and the long

* *Taupo*, the town maid. This distinction is usually conferred on a girl of good family, and has many honours and emoluments in the way of presents attached to it. In some cases a *taupo* will not marry till she reaches middle age, and occasionally will remain single.

knife called *nifa oti*. I saw that he was very, very tall and strong, and Selema told me that there were many girls who desired him for a husband, though he was poor, and, it was known, was disliked by my father.

Now this girl Selema, who was of my own age, was given to me as my especial *tavini* (maid) and I grew to like her as my own sister. She told me that already my father was casting about in his mind for a rich husband for me, and that the man he most favoured was old Tamavili, chief of Tufu, in Savai'i, who would soon be sending messengers with presents to him, which if they were accepted, would mean that my father was inclined to his suit, and that he, Tamavili, would follow himself and pay court to me.

All this frightened me, and I told Selema I would escape to my uncle in Manono, but she said that that would not do, as if he tried to protect me it would mean war. So I said nothing more, though much was in my mind, and I resolved to run away to the mountains, rather than be made to marry Tamavili, who was a very old man.

One day Selema and I went to the river to wash our hair with the pith of the wild oranges. We sat on the smooth stones near the water, and had just begun to beat the oranges with pieces of wood to soften them, when we saw a man come down the bank and enter a deep pool further up the stream.

"'Tis Manaia," said Selema; "he hath come to drag the pool for fish." Then she called out to him, "*Ola*, Manaia," and he looked at us and laughed as he spun his small hand-net into the pool. We sat and watched him and admired his strength and skill and the clever

way in which he dived and took the fish from his net. In a little while he had caught seven—beautiful fish, such as are in all the mountain streams of Samoa. Then he came out of the water, made a basket of leaves, and approached me, and without a word, laid them at my feet. This pleased me, so I put out my hand and touched one of the fish—meaning that one only would I take.

"They are all for thee, lady," he said in a low voice.

Selema laughed and urged me to accept the gift; so I took the basket, and then, when I looked at his face and saw that his eyes were still turned down, I took courage and said—

"Thou art Manaia. Dost thou remember me?"

"How could I forget thee?" he replied; and then he raised his eyes to my face, and I felt glad, for they were like unto those of my uncle Patiole—kind and soft when they looked into those of a woman or child, but steady and bold to those of a man.

"I am glad to see thee, Manaia," I said, "for I owe thee my life," and as he took my hand and pressed it to his forehead, Selema stole away and left us together.

Now I know not what he said to me, except that when he spoke the name of Tamavili of Tufu, I wept, and said that I would I were back at Manono, and that I was but a child, and had no desire to be wedded to any man. Then he lifted me up in his great arms, and said—

"I love thee, Sā Luia, I love thee! And even if thou canst not love me, yet shall I save thee from wedding this old dotard. Aye, I shall save thee from him as I saved thee from the boiling serf of Falema'a when thy mother, who was a great lady, cried out to me, 'Take my babe.'"

So that is how Manaia my husband wooed me, and when Selema came back and saw us seated together, she laughed again, though tears were in her eyes when she took my feet and pressed them to her cheeks, for she feared that when we fled, she would be left behind. Then Manaia whispered to me and asked me if it was to my mind to take her.

"Ay," I said; "else will my father kill her when we are gone."

So we made our plans, and when the messengers of Tamavili came and laid their presents before me, I said I was content, and that they could go back to their master, and tell him that in a month's time I would be ready and that he could come for me. This pleased my father, and although at night time I always slept between the two women, as is customary for a *taupo*, with a mat over me, and they lay on the outside, one on each side, yet in the day time I often met my lover in the forest, whilst Selema kept watch.

"We shall go to Uea," * he said; "'tis but seventy leagues away, and so soon as the rainy season is ended we shall start. I have bought a small but good boat and have strengthened it for the voyage with an outrigger, and in my mother's house is hidden all the food we can carry. In eight days more the westerly winds will cease, and we shall start, for then we shall have the Matagi Toe'lau (trade wind) and at Uea we shall be safe and live in peace. Then some day I shall send for my mothers and sisters, for on the night that

* Wallis Island, two hundred miles from Samoa. Many Samoans fled there for refuge after a reverse in battle or for other causes.

we escape, they too must flee for their lives to Seu Manu, of Apia, who will protect them from thy father's wrath."

On the morning of the fourth day after this, there came a strange messenger to the town to see my father, who in a little time appeared at his door with a smiling face and bade the conch be blown to summon the people together.

"Here is news, O people," he said. "Manka,* the white trader of Tufu, also seeketh my daughter, Sā Luia, in marriage. He and Tamavili have quarrelled—why, it matters not to me, or thee—and Manka, who is a very rich man, hath sent me word that he will compete with Tamavili. Whatever he offers for dowry and for presents to me, the white man will give double. This is a good day for me."

But the people were silent, for they knew that he was breaking his pledged word with Tamavili, and was setting at naught the old customs and the honour of the town. So, as he looked at them, he scowled; then he held out his hand, on the palm of which were ten American gold coins, each of twenty dollars.

"Two hundred dollars hath this white man, Manka, sent to my daughter Sā Luia as a present, with these words: 'If she cares not for my suit, well and good—let her have them made into bracelets for her pretty arms.'"

Now this was a great gift, and it came with such generous words that the people applauded, and my father smiled, as his long thin fingers closed around the heap of gold; but suddenly his face darkened as Manaia spoke.

* Monk.

"'Tis a free gift to the lady Sā Luia. Therefore, O Pule-o-Vaitafe, give it to her."

"Aye, aye! 'tis hers, 'tis hers," cried the people.

My father sent a glance of bitter hatred to my lover, and his lips twitched, but without a word he came to me, and bending low before me, put the money on the ground at my feet, and I, his daughter, heard his teeth grinding with rage, and as I felt his hot breath on my hand, I knew that murder was in his heart. It is easy for a chief such as was my father, to have a man who displeases him killed secretly.

My father went away in anger, and then the chiefs decided that although the white man could not wed me, he should be received with great honour, and be given many presents; for he was known to us as a man of great strength and daring, and was tattooed like a Samoan, which is a great thing to the mind of a Samoan woman, who loathes an untattooed man as unworthy of all that a woman can give, for without tattooing a young man hath no manhood, and his children are weak of body and poor of mind.

That night my father asked me for the money, which I gave him unwillingly, for I wished to send it back to the white man. He took it and placed it in a great box, which contained such things as guns, pistols, and powder and ball, and the key of which he always wore around his neck.

When the eighth day dawned, the sea was very smooth, and our hearts were gladdened by seeing that the wind was from the south-east, and as the day wore on, it increased in strength. When night fell, and the

evening fires were lit, Manaia, saying he was going to fish for *malau*, launched his boat and sailed along the shore for a league to the mouth of a small stream. Here he was met by his mother and sisters, who were awaiting him with baskets of cooked food, young coconuts and calabashes of water for the voyage. Then they put their arms around him, and wept as they bade him farewell, for seventy leagues is a long voyage for a small boat not intended for rough seas. Then they went into the forest and fled for their lives to Seu Manu of Apia, and Manaia waited for me.

When the town was buried in slumber, Selema, who lay near me, touched my head with her foot, and then asked me if I slept.

"Nay," I replied in a loud voice, and speaking with pretended anger, so as to awaken the two women between whom I lay. "How can I sleep? 'Tis too hot. Let us go to the beach awhile and feel the cool wind.

The two women grumbled a little at being disturbed, and Selema and I rose and went out of the house. Then, once we were at a safe distance, we ran swiftly to the beach, and then onwards to where Manaia awaited us.

Selema took her seat on the foremost thwart, Manaia at the stern, and I in the centre, and then we pushed off, and using canoe paddles, made for the passage through the reef out into the open sea. When the dawn broke, we were half-way across the straits which divide Savai'i from Upolu, and only two leagues away we saw the clustering houses of Tufu on the iron-bound coast. We did not dare to hoist the sail for fear of being seen, so continued to paddle, keeping well into

the middle of the straits. Only that the current was so fierce, Manaia would have steered north, and gone round the great island of Savai'i and then made westward, but the current was setting against the wind, and we should have all perished had we tried to go the north way.

Presently Manaia turned and looked astern, and there we saw the great mat sail of my father's double canoe, just rising above the water, and knew that we were pursued. So we ceased paddling, and hoisted our own sail, which made us leap along very quickly over the seas, though every now and then the outrigger would lift itself out of the water, and we feared that we might capsize. But we knew that Death was behind us, and so sat still, and no one spoke but in a whisper as we looked astern, and saw the sail of the great canoe growing higher and higher. It was a very large canoe and carried a hundred men, and on the raised platform was a cannon which my father had bought from a whale-ship when it was in his mind to fight against Tamalefaiga, who was the king of Upolu.

Suddenly Selema cried out that she saw a *taumualua* * and a boat with a sail coming towards us from Tufu, and my heart sank within me, for I knew that if they saw we were pursued by Pule-o-Vaitafe, they would, out of respect for him, stop us from escaping. Still there was naught for us to do but go on, and so we leapt and sprang from sea to sea, and Manaia bade us be of good heart, as he turned the head of the canoe toward the land.

"If this *taumualua* and the boat seek to stay us, I

* A large native-built boat.

shall run ashore," he said, "and we will take to the mountains. It is Manka's boat, for now I can see the flag from the peak—the flag of America."

"And the *taumualua* is that of Tamavili of Tufu," said Selema quietly, for she is a girl of great heart, "and it races with the white man's boat."

I, who was shaking with fear, cannot now well remember all that followed, after Manaia headed our canoe for the shore, and tried to escape, but suddenly, it seemed to me, the white man's boat, with flapping sail, was upon us, and Manka was laughing loudly.

"Ho, ho!" he cried, pulling his long white moustache, "so this is the way the wind bloweth! The old dotard Tamavili and I race together for a bride, and the bride is for neither of us, but for the man who saved her from the sea. Ha, ha! Thou art a fine fellow, Manaia, and I bear thee no ill will, even though the girl hath my good golden money."

"Nay, Manka," cried Selema quickly, and taking something from her girdle she held it up to the white man; "see, here is thy gift to the lady Sā Luia. We meant to give it back to thee with all good will, for Sā Luia loves no man but this her lover Manaia, who held her up from the angry sea when her mother died. And so when Pule-o-Vaitafe took the money from her—which was thy free gift—I waited till he slept, and stole the key of his treasure-chest, and took the money so that it might be returned to thee."

"Is this true?" asked the white man of Manaia.

"The money is thine," said Manaia, who knew not what else to say, "but the woman is mine. So let us

depart, for Tamavili and his men—whom no one in Mulifanua thought to see for three days yet—are drawing near, and we may escape by running the canoe through the surf, and taking to the mountains."

The white man swore an oath. "Thou art a fine fellow, and I bear no ill will, but will help thee to outwit that old dodderer who tried to steal away three days before me. I will put my boat between he and thee and keep him off. Whither wouldst land?"

"Not here, unless we are pressed. But we are in bad case; for see, on the one side comes Pule-o-Vaitafe, and on the other Tamavili. Yet if thou wilt be the good friend to us, we may escape both, and keep on our way to the open sea."

"The open sea!" cried Manka quickly—"and whither to?"

"To Uea."

"Thou art a bold fellow," said the white man again, "and shalt have the girl, for thou art worthy of her. And she shall keep the money for her dowry. I am no man to go back on my word, even though I lose so fair a bride. As for Pule-o-Vaitafe, I care not a blade of grass, and for Tamavili even less. And see, take this rifle, and if Tamavili cometh too close to thee, how can I help thee defending thyself and the women?"

With that he gave Manaia one of six rifles in his boat and two score and ten cartridges, some tobacco, matches, and a pipe; then he pressed our hands and wished us God-speed, and we parted, he sailing towards the *taumualua*, which was crowded with men, and we following. When he came within speaking distance of

Tamavili, he again brought his boat to the wind and mocked at the old man.

"Ho, ho! Tamavili. Whither goest in such a hurry? See, there in the canoe is the little bird we both sought, and there following comes her father. But she is neither for me nor thee. Is not her lover there, a fine man—nearly as handsome as I am, and big enough to make ten such rats as thee."

Tamavili was mad with rage, and did not answer. There were with Manka six men—all armed with rifles which loaded at the breech like that which he had given Manaia, and Manka was too great a man for even Tamavili to hurt. But suddenly, as we in the canoe sailed in between the boat and the *taumualua*, the old chief found his voice, and called out to Manaia to lower his sail.

"Give me the lady Sā Luia," he said, "and I will let thee and the girl Selema go," and as he spoke, the crew turned the *taumualua* round and came after us, twenty men paddling on each side.

"Keep back!" cried Manaia fiercely, as he changed seats with me, and giving me the steering paddle, he took up the rifle and loaded it.

"Beware, old man!" shouted Manka, "'tis a dog that bites!"

But Tamavili was too hot with anger to take heed, and shouted to his men to go on, and then Manaia took aim and fired, and two men went down.

"Ho, ho!" and Manka's voice again mocked, "did I not say 'twas a dog that bit?"

There was great commotion in the *taumualua* for a moment or two, but Tamavili shouted to his men to go

on; he would have ordered some of them to cease paddling and try and shoot Manaia, but feared to hurt or perhaps kill me, and that would have meant war between Tufu and Mulifanua.

"*Alō, alō foe!*" * he cried, standing up on the stern and brandishing his death-knife at Manaia. "I shall give thy head to the children of the village for a football ere the sun is in mid-heaven."

That was a foolish boast, for once more Manaia knelt and shot, and I turned my head and saw the blood spurt from Tamavili's naked chest as he fell down without a sound among the paddlers and a loud cry of anger and sorrow burst from his men. But in a moment a young sub-chief of Tufu named Lau Aula (the Golden-haired) took command and shouted to the crew to press on, and leaping to the bow, he began firing at us with a short gun (revolver) and one of the bullets struck the girl Selema on the leg and tore a hole through the fleshy part. Now this Lau Aula was a blood relative of Manaia, who called out to him to cease firing, but Lau Aula took no heed, and began shooting at us with muskets loaded with round bullets, which were handed to him by some of his people.

Then Manaia's face was evil to look at; his lips were drawn back, and his teeth showed like those of an angry dog, for the blood which flowed from Selema's wound was creeping around his naked feet. Yet once more he cried out to Lau Aula to beware ere it was too late; but the young chief called him a thief, and bade him bring the boat to the wind.

* "Paddle, paddle hard!"

"This for thee, then," cried Manaia, and once more he raised his rifle and fired, and Lau Aula spun round and fell over into the sea, for the bullet had struck him in the throat and his life was gone.

That was the last of the fight, for when Lau Aula fell, the rest of Tamavili's men threw down their paddles and let us sail on without further pursuit.

Then, whilst I steered, Manaia tied strips of tappa around Selema's leg so as to stay the bleeding.

"We are safe," cried the girl bravely through her tears, for the pain was very great. "See, lady, the wind is not strong enough for the big double canoe to pursue us."

But yet, in his rage, when my father saw that we were escaping, he lowered the mat sail and fired two shots at us with the cannon, and the great heavy balls roared over our heads and fell into the sea with a heavy splash not fifty fathoms away. But cannon-balls cost much money, and so, when a third shot was fired, and it fell astern of our boat, my father wasted no more, and we saw the sail again hoisted and the canoe go slowly down towards the *taumualua* of Tamavili, to which the white man was already rendering succour, for Manka, although he had quarrelled with the old chief of Tufu, was yet a man of a kind heart.

And so we sailed on before a fair, soft breeze, and by sunset the great mountain peaks of Savai'i had sunk beneath the sea rim, and we were steering westward by the bright stars with a great joy filling our hearts.

For four days we sailed steadily onwards, and Selema's wound soon began to heal. On the evening of the fourth

day we saw the land of Uea just showing above the sea rim, and thought to place our feet on the shore in the morning. But now came sorrow, for in the night it began to blow strongly from the north-east, and heavy rain squalls drove us past the land. In the morning there was but the open sea, and the waves were white and angry, and all that day and the next Manaia kept the boat to the wind, hoping that it would change and let us sail back to Uea. But we hoped vainly; and then, on the third day, there came such a furious storm that we could do naught but drive before it, and go on and on into the great unknown western ocean, whither so many have gone, and have been no more known of men. For many, many days we sailed on, and then, although we had much rain and so suffered no thirst, our food began to fail, and had not Manaia one day caught a sleeping turtle, we should have perished. Some time about the fourteenth day, we saw the jagged peaks of an island against the sky, and steered for it. It was the island called Rotumah—a fine, fair country, with mountains and valleys and running streams, and on it dwell people who are like unto us Samoans in appearance and manners and language. We sailed the boat into a bay on which stood a village of many houses, and the people made us welcome and gave us much food, and besought us to stay there, for their island was, they said, a better place than Uea. And this we should have done and been content, but in the night, as I slept in the house of the unmarried women, a girl whispered in my ear—

"Get thee away with thy lover and the girl Selema. Felipa, the head chief of Fao, hath been told of thy

beauty, and hath sent word here that the man Manaia must be killed to-night, and thou and Selema be sent to him. This is wrong for even a chief to do, and we of this place would aid thee to escape."

So Manaia and I and Selema stole away to the boat, and the people of the village, who pitied us, pretended not to hear or see us. They were very kind, and had put baskets of cooked food and other things into the boat; and so we pushed off, and stood out to sea once more. They had told us to go round to the north end of the island, where there was a chief named Loli, who would protect us and give us a home.

But again evil fortune befell us, for the chief of Fao, hearing of our escape, sent a messenger overland to Loli, claiming us as *mea tafea i moana*—gifts sent to him by the sea—and asking him to hold us for him. And so Loli, who would have welcomed us, was afraid, and begged us not to land and so bring about bloodshed.

"Great is my sorrow, O wanderers," he cried to us, as we sat in the boat a little distance from the beach, "but ye must not land. Steer to the west, and a little to the south, where there is a great land—many, many islands which trend north and south." *

"Is it far?" asked Manaia scornfully.

"Four days for a ship, longer for a boat," replied Loli shamefacedly; "the gods go with thee, farewell."

Once again we sailed towards the setting sun, steering by the stars at night time, and for seven days all went well. Then after that there came calms, and the hot sun beat upon us and ate its way into our hearts,

* The New Hebrides Group.

and we saw no sign of land, and only now and then did a seabird come near us. And then came the time when all our food was gone, and we waited for death to come. Manaia had eaten no food for five days when it came to this, for he said he was feeling quite strong, and divided his share between us. Once as he and I slept Selema put a little piece of old coconut—the last that was left—into my hand, and slipped over the side to die, but Manaia heard her, and, although he was very weak, he roused and caught her as she sank.

Two days before that on which the ship found us Manaia shot a small shark which was following the boat. It was not as long as a man's arm nor as thick as a woman's, but it kept us alive. Manaia gave us all the flesh, and kept only the head and skin for himself; after that all the world became dark to me, and we lay together in the boat to die.

The captain of the whale-ship was very kind to us, and when he found that the sailor named Falaoa did not wish to part from us on account of Selema, whom he wished to marry, he gave his consent, and said he would land us all here at Nufilole, where there was a white man who would be kind to us.

That is all, and now my husband Manaia and I, and Falaoa and his wife Selema are well content to live here always. For even now, after many months have passed, do Selema and I cry out in our slumbers, and when we awaken our hair lies wet upon our foreheads; but soon all these bad dreams will pass away from us for ever.

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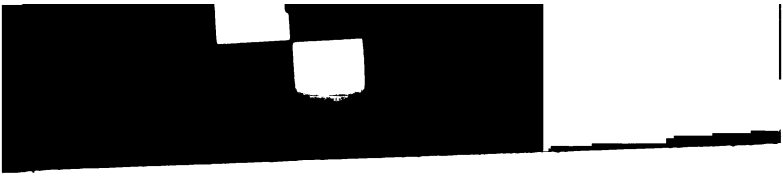

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